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**VILLAGE
DIALOGUES,**

BETWEEN

**FARMER LITTLEWORTH, THOMAS NEWMAN, REV. MR.
LOVEGOOD, AND OTHERS.**

BY

REV. ROWLAND HILL, A. M.

FROM THE

EIGHTEENTH LONDON EDITION.

WITH

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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DIALOGUE XXXII.

MR. WORTHY AND FAMILY, MR. CONSIDERATE, AND
THOMAS NEWMAN.

THE HAPPY MARRIAGE.

ACCORDING to the hint given in the former Dialogue, the reader must now be informed, that two days after Mr. Lovegood's return from the Lovely's, the intended union between Mr. Merryman and Miss Worthy took place. As the reporter of these events was not at the wedding, much information from him cannot be expected on that subject. From the feelings of female delicacy, it was the wish of Miss Worthy that the marriage should be solemnized with all possible secrecy; and in order to accomplish this, the family went to the church with Mr. Worthy and Mr. Lovegood, apparently with a design to see about a gallery that was erecting for the children of the sunday school, and some other accommodations, that the poor might be better seated, who so plentifully crowd the aisles. And while the carpenters were gone to their breakfast, old Andrew Snuffle, the Clerk, was ordered to attend at a moment's warning, and then the marriage ceremony was performed. They next retired to Brookfield Hall, when a very appropriate prayer for a blessing on the union, was offered up by Mr. Lovegood.

Though this event was thus performed in secret, yet it was not the wish of the family that it should be kept a secret. Old Andrew went directly to the ringers, who began gingling the bells as well as they could; though one of them being cracked, and ano-

ther of them having lately lost its clapper, the music of the steeple was but a coarse exhibition of the people's joy. Seldom had Mr. Lovegood an ill word from any of his parishioners ; but on this event the ringers were almost angry with him for having opposed the repair of the bells ; but he well knew, that this sort of music was frequently a temptation to disorderly conduct. Mr. Worthy was also of the same opinion, being entirely satisfied that a better set of bells could never be wanted to call the people to public worship, while *the best bell* in the Church, (referring to the pulpit,) was so thoroughly *sound*, and had in it such an *excellent clapper*, to charm the ears and hearts of all, who had grace to attend on its melodious sound.

Mr. Worthy therefore, having sent to the ringers the accustomed compliment, requesting them and the rest of the inhabitants of the village, to keep the testimony of their joy within proper limits, on that happy event, especially as the bride and bridegroom were going off for Sandover directly ; and that if they would wait for their return in about a fortnight, when they were to come and pass a few days at Brookfield Hall, he would then, on the condition of their orderly behaviour, invite them to partake of a marriage feast at his own house ; and as a word from Mr. Worthy, was always a law throughout the village. Many cheerful blessings were pronounced on the union, all having one and the same wish, that the family of the Worthys might be built up in all its collateral branches ; and that from age to age, they might be a blessing to the country, wherever "the bounds of their habitations might be fixed."

Though the precise time of this intended union was known to none at Sandover but Mr. Merryman's servants, yet immediately on their arrival, though in the evening of the day, the event soon transpired through all the neighbourhood ; and Mr. Merryman had scarcely finished his family prayer, when they were saluted with the following hymn, accompanied

with instrumental music, and sung by some of his affectionate parishioners, in the court yard of his rectory house.

THE HYMN.

IN Paradise the joy began,
When male, and female both were one;
Their hearts entwin'd in mutual love,
Their mutual joy was love alone.

But ah! lamented be the day,
When man forsook the God of love;
Till Christ the second Adam came,
And brought salvation from above.

Invited to the marriage feast,
The Holy Saviour grac'd the day;
There his first miracle he wrought,
That thence he might his power display.

Let this fond pair, enrich'd with grace,
Like clusters rich from Canaan's vine,
Be bless'd with all his love and power,
Who turn'd the water into wine.

Witness their marriage, dearest Lord,
Emblem of thy uniting grace;
One with each other, one with thee,
For ever bless them, " Prince of Peace."

Upon the bridal pair look down,
Who now have plighted heart and hands,
Their union with thy favour crown,
And bless, O bless, the nuptial bands.

With gifts and grace their hearts endow,
Of all rich dowries far the best:
Their substance bless, and peace bestow,
And that shall sweeten all the rest.

True helpmates in the heavenly road,
O may they tread the paths of life!
Those peaceful paths so far remote,
From all the rugged ways of strife.

As Isaac and Rebecca gave
A pattern mild, and chaste and kind;
So may this new-met couple live
As one, in constant union join'd.

Many were inquisitive to know from whence these good people procured their poetry, while some were of opinion that it was the production of Mr. Lovegood, written on a former marriage occasion, and which had got into circulation by having been transcribed by different persons : yet others judged that it was somewhat below the general pitch of his poetry and that it might more probably have been the production of a Mrs. Rhymer, who lived in those parts, and to whom Mr. Merryman's ministry had been made very useful. But that we may deal upon uncertainties and conjectures no longer, the reader shall have other particulars in a dialogue, which took place between Mr. Worthy and family, and our old favourite Thomas Newman, who had been to Sandover with his eldest daughter Betty, the day after the marriage, that she might attend as a servant on Mrs. Merryman ; and where Thomas himself had been detained, that he might help Mr. Merryman with a little of his advice, as it respected the management of his glebe, and some other little husbandry concerns, which he now found necessary to undertake upon his settlement in a family way.

[Thomas is introduced.]

Tho. Your servant your honour ; I have a letter to your honour, from Madam Merryman.

[Mr. Worthy reads the letter, and hands it to Mrs. Worthy.]

Wor. Well Thomas, I perceive my daughter and her husband are very well—sit down, I want to have some conversation with you about them.

Tho. With your honour's leave, I had rather stand. I should be ashamed to sit down before your honour.

Wor. Nay, nay, Thomas, you must sit down ; I shall have many questions to ask, and you must be tired ; for you have had a long walk from Sandover.

[After much persuasion, Thomas sits down at a

modest distance from his honour ; for Thomas reads his Bible, and that directs him to “ give honour to whom honour is due ;” while the truly honourable Mr. Worthy, is as wisely instructed to “ condescend to men of low estate.”]

Wor. Well, and what do the people of Sandover think of Mr. Merryman, for having taken my daughter away from me ?

Tho. Ah dear, your honour ! why the people at Sandover are delighted to *admiration* at the match.

Mrs. Wor. I am glad they are Thomas ; I am thoroughly persuaded my daughter will do all in her power to make a good wife, and a good minister’s wife.

Tho. Why Madam, the very day after her marriage, she went with that dear gentleman, and *for* sure he is a precious soul ! and visited ever so many poor *folk* about the parish, and gave something wherever she went.

Mrs. Wor. She told us, that she should want no fine wedding clothes in going to Sandover : and that she had rather, when she came there, lay out that money among the poor, that she might put a little decent clothing on their backs, for that they needed it more than what she did.

Tho. Why Madam, I never saw people so happy in all my *born days*, as the people at Sandover were, when they saw such a humble good young lady, walking about in such a plain way and dress ; while some foolish, proud *folk* supposed that your honour would have sent her home in a coach and six, and that there should have been bonfires, and nobody knows what fine things besides.

Wor. Indeed Thomas, had we acted such a part, the old proverb had been true against us, “ A fool and his money are soon parted.” But I hope my daughter will prove a very useful helpmate to that good young minister.

Tho. ’Las your honour, you cannot tell how they talk of Mr. Merryman all the parish over, and what

stories the people tell of his humble, and good natured ways : though 'Squire Wild, that lives in his parish, never comes to hear him ; but orders that his pew should be locked up, that none of the poor people, who come from far, should go into his pew : and so good Mr. Merryman has ordered a pair of steps to be made, that people may get over into the 'Squire's pew, because he did not chuse to break the lock ; but he says nobody has a right to lock up their pews, if they won't come there themselves. And so the people can get over very well, and then the rest of the poor people sit upon the steps. 'Squire Wild was great enough with Mr. Merryman, while they were all living together in the same wicked way ; and now and then he would come to Church, but he would do nothing but laugh and jeer with Madam Wild and his daughters all the time : and now he says every thing that he can think of, against Mr. Merryman, poor dear young gentleman !

Wor. That is not at all to be wondered at Thomas, while "the carnal mind is enmity against God." But Mr. Merryman is quite in the right of it, no family should lock up a pew if they do not fill it themselves : though he does very wisely in opposing bad measures with as much mildness as he can. But did not the people want to be feasted upon the occasion ?

Tho. Oh no your honour ! Mr. Merryman said he should make no feast but for the poor : and so he sent five guineas to the bakers, to be given away among such poor, as he and the overseers might think fit.

Wor. Only five guineas Thomas !

Tho. Why your honour, I thought that was a *desperate big* sum ; but then he ordered five guineas more be sent to the butchers, that a bit of meat might be given to every poor man, that was to have the loaf of bread. His heart is wonderfully set on doing good.

Wor. Why Thomas, the only proof that we are good, is when we are enabled by the grace of God to do good : every tree is known alone by its fruits.

But Mr. Merryman tells us he kept you all Friday and Saturday, talking about his little husbandry affairs, and that he would make you stop over the Sunday ; how did poor Betty do without you all the time ?

Tho. Why to be sure, Betty and I never were so long away from each other since we have been married, and now it is fourteen years, come a fortnight after next Mapleton fair day. It seemed to us a longful time to be apart ; and we both of us found it *desperate* hard work to part with our poor daughter ; but there she is gone to a charming place ; and young Madam Merryman takes to her wonderfully. The Lord bless the child, and give her grace !

Wor. Aye Thomas, that sets all right, and keeps all right : but how is it that you cannot bear to part with your children, when you have so many of them ?

Tho. The Lord be praised, we have none too many ! Betty and I have always noticed it, the more we have of them, the more the Lord blesses us. Whenever we seem to be a little sharp run, one good body or another, besides your honour, is always sending us something ; we want nothing but thankful hearts.

Wor. Why as Mr. Lovely's great uncle has left him his fortune, he talks of taking your eldest son Thomas off your hands.

Tho. To be sure, it is very kind of the young gentleman. Edward of the Golden Lion, has told me a deal about him. But it will be a desperate hard *gripe* for me and Betty to part with him. How movingly he talked about a sermon our minister preached a few Sundays ago, upon the wise and foolish virgins !* Dear child, he was quite in tears, while he was saying how much afraid he was, lest he should be among the foolish virgins ? and Betty and I were as much overcome at his talk as he was.

Wor. Well Thomas, this should give you encou-

* This must certainly have been the same sermon that so much offended Mr. Lovely, see Dialogue XXI.

ragement to bring up your children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Tho. Why I'll assure your honour, that Betty, who is gone to live with Madam Merryman, is a very pretty spirited child : though little Sammy is a mighty *stomachful* boy ; but by the Lord's blessing, he may get better as he gets older.

Wor. But Thomas, if Mr. Lovely should ever chuse to take your son, you must not object to it. I have no doubt but it will be the making of him, if he turns out well.

Tho. Oh no ; if the young 'Squire should chuse to take him ; I shall be sure to follow your honour's advice, and let him go ; though they say he lives a *desperate* way off, almost half as far as London.

Mrs. Wor. But Thomas, how did you like Mr. Merryman on the Sunday ?

Tho. Like him, Madam ? Who could but chuse to like him ; excepting Mr. Lovegood, I think he must be one of the finest men in all the world.

Wor. I suppose there was a fine crowd to see Mr. Merryman bring his bride to Church, for the first time.

Tho. Why your honour knows it is always crowded ; for Rector Grumble of the next parish, has been preaching such scolding sermons against modern *'thusists*, that he has driven all the people away. Some of them go off to a Dissenting meeting, where they say a very good man preaches, and a great many more of them come to Mr. Merryman's Church ; and yet Rector Grumble keeps scolding at the empty pews as bad as ever.

Mrs. Wor. I hope Mr. Merryman does not scold in return.

Tho. He scold, dear gentleman ! It would be a hard matter to set him a scolding. He has such a sweet loving heart of his own, since it has been changed by the grace of God ! but to be sure the Church was wonderfully crowded. I am sure it was *mighty moving* : I never was so affected in all my *born days*.

Mrs. Wor. What was so moving Thomas?

Tho. Why madam, there was such a wonderful fine garland placed over the gate of the church yard, and on the side of it, there was a writing in great large letters, "God bless the happy pair!" and on the other side, "Long live the family of the Worthys!" and then your honour, there was over the garland a painting like two hands taking hold of each other, and holding two hearts joined together; and out of the two hearts, there was a flame of fire, and in that flame there was a writing, in these words, "*God is love.*" And as soon as Mr. Merryman and his lady came into the church, the singers struck up with such a charming fine hymn, I don't think Mr. Lovegood could have made a better.

Wor. Why, perhaps Mr. Lovegood made it Thomas, for he was in the secret about the marriage: but we have seen a copy of it.

Tho. It was the same hymn your honour, that they sung in the court yard, the night Mr. Merryman and madam came home. And then the singers would have me with them, to help them to pitch the tune; but instead of singing, alas your honour! the sight of it so much affected me, in seeing the people stand up, as though they were all praying for a blessing on them, at the same time, it made me quite cry for joy; if it had been King George, and Queen Charlotte, the people could not have given them more honour. The Lord grant that they may be as happy as Betty and I.

Mrs. Wor. I should suppose all this love, and affection from the good people, was enough to overset my daughter.

Tho. Why Madam, I heard, when she came into her pew, she was so overcome, that she had almost swooned away.

Wor. Well Thomas, I have put my daughter into very good hands; and what is best of all, I trust they are both in the hands of the Lord.

Tho. Ah! but your honour knows, that he was not in the hands of the Lord before he heard our dear

minister at the visitation, and when he was running after all sorts of *romancing nonsenses*. And now there are some *folk* who can scarcely help making their *sports at him*, though he lives such a different life, from what he did in his wicked unregenerate days.

Wor. Why has any one been laughing at him of late?

Tho. Why they say old Mr. Quibble, the lawyer, met him the other day, while he was carrying a poor old woman's basket on his horse, because she appeared so weak, that she could not carry it herself, while she was walking along the road to market; and there lawer Quibble, they say, made such a *jeering and joking* at him for it, when he was at 'Squire Wild's. But such sort of hard-hearted lawyers have no *conceivance* what the tender-hearted ministers of Christ feel, when they see their fellow creatures in such distress.

Mrs. Wor. Well, well, Thomas, we shall not be ashamed of our son-in-law for such easy, good-natured tricks as these; but did he not want you and your family to come over and live at Sandover, to take care of his gardens and little farming concerns? You might render them a deal of service, and I am sure they would be very kind to you.

Tho. Ah madam! that I am sure he would; but then there is my dear old master, and my mistress. Sometimes I hope the Lord will change her heart, for she is wonderfully different to what she was. And then there is Master Henry, and Miss Nancy, and it is to *admiration* how kind they all behave to me and Betty; and then there is our dear minister. Why madam, I never can think of leaving Brookfield parish, while he preaches in the church.

Wor. Oh no Thomas, we have no inclination to part with you, though my son-in-law might be all the better for it; besides, I hope we shall have some *church preferment* for you by and by. It is much more likely that you should be clerk of the parish, than

that Mr. Lovegood should be archbishop of Canterbury.* I believe we must soon put off poor old Andrew Snuffle with a pension. He makes sad blunders, and you know he frequently puts our minister out shockingly; at times he cries *Amen* in the middle of a prayer; and when my daughter was married, he mistook the business, and began answering to the office of the churching of women.

Tho. Ah poor Andrew! his hearing is very bad; and his eyes are got very dim: but how shall such a poor creature as I am, stand up in such a place? Though to be sure it would be a *rare* help to Betty and our children.

[Servant enters.]

Serv. Sir, Mr. and Miss Considerate are come to wait upon you.

[They enter, and Thomas retires, after returning many thanks for having received two half-crowns, the one from Mr. and the other from Mrs. Worthy, and an order to be well fed in the kitchen.]

Consid. Sir, I am come with my daughter to wait upon you with our hearty congratulations, on the happy marriage which has taken place in your family.

Mr. and Mrs. Wor. We heartily thank you Sir; pray be seated. Is Mrs. Considerate well?

Consid. Very well, I thank you Sir: but if I may be allowed to tell a family secret, in our little way, it unfortunately happens to be washing week; and this is a season of great importance in little families. She supposes therefore, that as my daughter came with me, that her superintendence will be needed at home; otherwise she would have walked with us. She means however, very soon to pay her respects to you on this happy event.

Wor. Mrs. Considerate has at all times been a notable Martha.

* See Dialogue VI.

Consid. Yes Sir, and since she has become a truly spiritual Mary, she has continued not less a notable Martha. She is always frugal and industrious, though never mean : while she is prudent and saving, she is just, generous, and kind.

Wor. Sir, it is your mercy to have such a wife.

Consid. Sir, a wife is either the best or the worst piece of furniture a man can possibly possess.

Wor. We have frequently heard, that her character is that of a most liberal economist : by all accounts, I do not know what her poor neighbours would do without her. It is said, that she can make the richest caudle, and cook the best broth, and patch up the greatest quantity of old clothes, at the cheapest rate, of any person in the parish, for the good of her poor neighbours.

Consid. Indeed Sir she can ; though by her notableness she coaxes many a shilling out of my pocket ; but while she is such a conscientious, yet generous economist, I lose nothing by all she gives ; and whatever she does, is done with cheerfulness ! I never saw her melancholy but once, and that was enough to make us both melancholy, when we lost our two sons by being both drowned in the river, at the same time.

Mrs. Wor. Ah dear Sir ! though we were not acquainted with each other in those days, yet we sincerely sympathised with you.

Consid. Oh madam ! It was enough to break our hearts ; two more promising children never lived ; and surely never were two brothers known to be more affectionately fond of each other. Indeed this was the cause of the catastrophe ; for my eldest son seeing that his brother had got out of his depth, and was crying for help, unfortunately plunged in after him with all his clothes on ; and was carried down the stream with him, when they both sunk together in a deep hole, under some willows that overhung the bank. To see two such lovely, alert children, that had left my house but an hour before, full of all that

vivacity and life which belongs to youth, brought home breathless, and stretched on the same board—Oh Sir!—[Mr. Considerate weeps.]

Wor. But it seems Sir, it was that calamity which first brought Mrs. Considerate to seek after the consolation of the Gospel.

Consid. Yes Sir, I trust this heavy judgment has been overruled in much mercy to us both; for while we still continued very much dejected by our loss, our kind neighbours did all they could, in their way, to revive our spirits, by inviting us to their tea tables and card parties; but alas! in vain. We did not then know, under the loss of both our beloved Isaacs, as we had no other child left but our daughter, that we wanted an Abraham's faith to support us.

Wor. Ah Sir! we get but poor consolation from any other quarter; it requires more than is to be found in nature under such circumstances, meekly to say, "Thy will be done."

Consid. Why Sir, for a time I foolishly thought I could console my mind from natural reasons and moral philosophy; and it was just then Mr. Lovegood sent us that excellent little treatise upon affliction,* entitled "Correction, Instruction; or the Rod and the Word;" together with a consolatory letter, written with such modest tenderness and humility, as very much captivated my wife and daughter, while I had too good an opinion of my own understanding, to suppose I needed any instructions from him; yet I could not but at the same time, love and admire his design.

Wor. But I think Sir, it was this event that first brought Mrs. Considerate and your daughter to Brookfield church?

Consid. Yes Sir, and I found they were soon instructed in the lesson of meek and humble submission to the will of God, which I had still to learn; and it

* Written by Mr. Thomas Case, one of the ejected ministers, and recommended by Dr. Manton, of which a new edition has been lately published.

was a long time before shame would let me go with them, though I never opposed. The preaching and conduct of Mr. Dolittle, gave me but a poor opinion of the religion he professed. Well Sir, though it has been the will of God to deprive me of my future expectations, by taking from me two such dear children, yet may your daughter, and newly adopted son, long live to be a blessing to their neighbourhood! I really trust this will prove a happy event to many, though it is probable Mrs. Merryman, from her situation in life, might in some respects have formed a more advantageous connexion for herself.

Wor. Why, we esteem it a very happy connexion, when the better side of the question is taken into consideration; for between friends, my daughter had a very handsome offer from young Mr. Gay; and I was highly pleased with her conduct on this occasion. The moral character of Gay is quite unexceptionable, his fortune is ample, and in many respects he is a very desirable young man: but then his connexions are quite in the world, and he himself is not averse to what are improperly called the innocent amusements, or rather gayeties of life.

Miss Consid. Yes Sir, she was pleased to give me a hint that she had received such a proposal; but said, however in other respects she might like him, yet, as it regarded religious matters, she thought they never could be happy with each other.

Wor. Why we perceived that for some days there was a strong struggle upon her mind, till she broke it to us, with a full determination not to attend to it: and for a considerable time, we have discovered a much stronger bias towards Mr. Merryman.

Consid. Sir, I think nobody can wonder at that: since he has been blessed with the grace of God, he is become a very amiable youth. All that know him, one would think, would cry concerning him, "What hath God wrought!"

Wor. This made us determine to leave the young people to the leadings of their own minds. What

she loses in point of affluence, I am satisfied, by the blessing of God, she will gain in point of happiness.

Consid. Sir, if God preserve their lives, I have no doubt but that the union will be attended with his blessing. We have nothing to do but to follow the wise rules which we find in our Bibles, and that will assuredly prove the ready way to happiness. When people are unequally yoked in any connexions in life, especially in the marriage state, they may depend upon it, they will make themselves miserable through life. I cannot but think that Miss Worthy has acted a part, as you observe, highly commendable to her character. If she should be the less affluent, I am sure she will be a thousand times more happy with Mr. Merryman, than ever she could have been with Mr. Gay.

Wor. She will doubtless be called to move in a more humble sphere; yet therein she will be much more likely to be protected and preserved. Thomas Newman, who just left the room as you came in, has been giving us a very pleasing narration, how they were both received at Sandover on the day of their marriage.

Consid. Ah Sir! I have heard all about it. The people of Sandover think themselves very happy on the occasion, though Mr. Spiteful of Mapleton, goes about from house to house, railing at the match like a madman.

Wor. What is that to him?

Consid. True Sir; but I think he would burst if he had not now and then an opportunity to vent his spleen; he has got hold of the old stale cry, which is indeed promiscuously levelled against all religious people that Mr. Merryman is a Jacobin, and is contriving all he can to overturn the Church and State; and that all the *canting tribe*, round about the country, are secretly combined together in the same plot, by Sunday schools, and other religious exertions; while I hope truly religious people are better taught

than to interrupt the state, especially while the state never interrupts them.

Wor. I do not believe there is a man living, more attached to the government of his country than Mr. Merryman. But let Mr. Spiteful rail on, for nobody believes him; I question if he believes himself.—Such persons can do no harm, but as they do harm to themselves.

Consid. But Sir, did you hear what a fine speech poor Thomas Newman made use of to him, when he took it into his head to banter the poor man, while he had some of his master's cattle to attend to at the last Mapleton fair?

Wor. What was that, Sir?

Consid. Why Sir, Farmer Snakish and Mr. Spiteful, who are cousins german, came both of them together to the upper green, where you know the fair for cattle is kept, and seeing poor Thomas, who was there attending upon the sale of his master's property; they came up to him, and began talking about the price of cattle; but more with a design to banter him, than to deal with him. They next began sneering at Thomas about his young master, how he came to run away from home so soon after his *miraculous conversion*, and whether it was not after some of his old wicked tricks.

Wor. What could they mean by that?

Consid. Oh Sir, they had got hold of the story of Mr. Henry Littleworth's design in his journey to Locksbury, and this was their way of interpreting it. After this they began with their insulting speeches against Mr. Lovegood, laughing at Mrs. Chipman's *miraculous conversion*, and insinuating as though it was only a trick between her and Mr. Lovegood. Then they began making their bitter remarks on Mr. Merryman, saying that the top and bottom of his *conversion*, appeared now to be nothing but craft, that he might contrive to get your daughter for his wife. Thomas replied, that he was well persuaded such a conversion could never have been accomplished but by

the great God himself; adding, that it would be a greater miracle still, if God would convert either of them. Upon this, old Spiteful cried, "The great God! what do you know of the great God? I suppose Parson Lovegood has made you so wise, that you can tell us how great God is, and how little God is, and all about it.

Wor. To say the least of it, this sort of banter was horridly profane.

Consid. But Thomas's answer was remarkably to the purpose.—He paused and said, "Yes Sir, I can tell you, both how great God is, and how little God is." Spiteful cried—Ah, I thought Lovegood had made a clever fellow of you: but let us hear it."—Thomas answered, "Though he is *so great*, that even the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, being the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, and which no man hath seen nor can see: yet he is *so little*, that he can dwell in the hearts of the humble and the contrite; and take up his gracious abode, even in such a poor unworthy sinner as myself."

While Mr. Considerate and Mr. Worthy were thus in conversation, Lord Rakish's carriage drove up to the door, with their congratulations on this event. Mr. Worthy rang the bell immediately, and ordered his boots, that he might appear as if he were going out, that his Lordship might think it necessary to shorten his visit. Mr. Considerate was very glad to make his escape from the interview, while the poor flimsy conversation of his Lordship would be as uninteresting to the reader to peruse, as it would be unpleasant for the writer to relate. Nor has he time to give a minute account of what took place at the promised marriage feast at Brookfield Hall. Let it suffice, that it was conducted with that liberality, yet decency and sobriety, which are the

standing orders of the house. Some very appropriate hymns were sung ; an exhortation was given by Mr. Lovegood, principally upon the duties of the marriage state ; while he still kept up his constant rule, never to expatiate upon *moral* duties, but upon *gospel* principles. Thus the writer concludes the present Dialogue, with an additional request to his young readers, that whenever they may be called in providence into the marriage state, they would not forget (at least) to take this leaf out of his book ; that their marriage may be conducted with the like solemnity, and equally in the fear of God.

DIALOGUE XXXIII.

MR. LOVEGOOD AND THE FAMILY OF THE WORTHYS.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE MINISTERIAL CHARACTERS OF MR. DELIBERATE, AND MR. LEGAL-DEFINITION : TOGETHER WITH A FURTHER NARRATION OF THE AFFAIRS OF MRS. CHIPMAN, AND THE RESULT OF MR. LOVEGOOD'S VISIT TO LOCKSBURY.

THE reader will remember, that he has been twice interrupted in the narration of the affairs of the unhappy Mrs. Chipman. It has been thought most advisable to attend to the chronology of events rather than regularly to detail each subject by itself. Whatever is done by Providence, has in it abundantly more beauty of design, than that which is dressed by art. To refresh the reader's memory, he is requested to recollect the conclusion of Dialogue the Twenty-sixth : he will there find, that Mrs. Chipman was left perfectly deranged, in which state she continued for full six weeks.

After her recovery, she was still bent upon the idea, that she could never more make her appearance at Locksbury, where her notorious conduct had rendered her the object of universal disgust. She wished rather to keep a school where she was : but still the yearnings of a mother's bowels over the fatherless, and forsaken child, would not suffer her to be happy, till she had it under her immediate care. However, Mr. Reader was as unwilling to part with his grandchild, as his daughter was to live without it ; and

other circumstances turning up in Providence, demanded that Mrs. Chipman should forego her feelings, and return to her native home. Mr. Chipman had a younger brother; an attentive, decent young man. The neighbourhood advised that the business should not be dropt; and Mr. Reader agreed that the deceased brother's property should be continued in the business, provided his daughter, for the sake of the child, should be a partner in the concern. Matters being thus settled, she had no other alternative, than to leave Brookfield, and undertake the charge of the partnership assigned to her care.

Her father therefore, wrote to her after her recovery, begging her to submit to the plan; persuading himself that their happiness with each other, being now found on the solid basis of their union with Christ, and consequently on the best of principles, would be far superior to what can be enjoyed from mere natural affection, independent of the loving influences which are experienced in the hearts of all those, who "love the Lord Jesus in sincerity."

Mr. Reader at the same time strongly urged, that Mr. Lovegood should attend her, in order that he might accept Mr. Fribble's offer of the pulpit, that his neighbours might have an opportunity of hearing the same glorious truths, whereby such wonders of grace had been felt, not only on the hearts of his daughter and her husband, that he humbly trusted on his own heart also. Mr. Worthy was equally desirous that Mr. Lovegood should attend the call, though his congregation at all times parted with him with much regret; while Mr. Lovegood felt himself more at liberty to a second excursion, though so speedily after the former, under the consideration that a serious clergyman, Mr. Deliberate, was then upon a visit in that neighbourhood. Perceiving therefore, that he should not leave his beloved flock under the care of Mr. John Nokes, or Mr. Thomas Styles, provided he was but in *holy orders*; he concluded it was again the call of

Providence, that he should make his second excursion from his congregation, and family. He allowed himself only one Sunday's absence for this journey. From this, his domestic disposition, may have lamented that one of the best of ministers has been prevented from shining among others, equal to the full lustre of that character, which he ever appeared to possess, in the retired situation he filled with such dignity and devotedness of heart. Matters being thus settled, Mrs. Chipman, with many tears, and the strongest expressions of gratitude, and thankfulness to her kind benefactors, departed from Brookfield, in one of the stages which goes within a short distance of Locksbury, attended by Mr. Lovegood—giving leave for Mr. Spiteful to say, that *Lovegood* had left the country, and was gone nobody knew where, with the woman he had so marvellously converted: insinuating much by saying little. Such were the speeches of this wretched creature; himself being such a miserable composition of jealousy, craft, and spleen.

Mr. Lovegood's journey to, and from Locksbury, occupied near a fortnight of his time. The reader shall be acquainted with the result of this visit, in the conversation which took place between him and the family of the Worthy's at Brookfield Hall, on his return on the Saturday afternoon.

Wor. Well Sir, we are glad to see you home again, though we had two very judicious sermons from Mr. Deliberate: He is a serious and solid divine, yet I wish he was not so dry and formal.

Mrs. Wor. His sermons may be good ones, but I cannot admire for myself, such a formal, cold, systematic method of preaching.

Loveg. Mr. Deliberate is an excellent chamber divine, if I may so speak, and capable of writing good sound lectures in divinity; but that which is delivered with greater simplicity, and which comes more to

the point, so as to reach the conscience, certainly does most good.

Wor. I confess that the heart should be affected, as well as the head instructed ; our affections should be enlivened, while our judgments are enlightened ; though Mr. Deliberate is certainly a man of a very deep understanding.

Mrs. Wor. My dear, I do not pretend to be a judge of the depth of his understanding ; but it appeared to me, that though the people continued gaping at him through half his sermon, yet, before he concluded, some of the congregation seemed to be half asleep. But in my opinion he is a better preacher, than Mr. Legal-definition.

Loveg. As to Mr. Legal-definition, I could very readily put up with his long and tiresome definitions, of which he makes almost the whole of his sermons, if he would but give us more of the gospel.

Wor. I think I have heard him preach three times, and one of his sermons was tolerably evangelical ; but the others had not a word of the gospel in them : all the time was taken up upon the duty of forgiving our enemies.

Loveg. And what a fine opportunity he had of impressing that excellent duty from evangelical principles, when we are directed "to forgive one another, even as God, *for Christ's sake*, has forgiven us !" It is much to be admired, how closely St. Paul urges all social, and relative duties, as resting upon no other principles, than those which are evangelical ; as though he knew no other arguments to be conclusive among Christians, but those which spring from the atonement and salvation of our Lord. We are "bought with a price, therefore we must glorify God in our bodies, and spirits, which are his." When the mortification of sin is mentioned, it is said, we are "crucified with Christ," and "made conformable to his death ;" that thereby "we are crucified unto the world, and the world unto us ;" so that "we reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin," through his death ; and

that we are so completely dead unto sin, that we are even said "to be buried with him." So in regard to that heavenly mindedness, which is the very life, and soul of all spiritual obedience, we are said "to be made partakers of the power of his resurrection;" to be "risen with Christ; quickened together with Christ;" and that we are "made alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." How poor and low are the dry arguments of the moralists, when compared with these! If these motives will not prevail against our corruptions, I am sure no others will.

Wor. I know that all other arguments in defence of morality, have argued almost all morality out of the country. We never can have practical religion, but upon evangelical principles. But Mr. Legal-definition is very fond of what he calls, "guarding the gospel," which he only ventures now and then to bring out as a *rarity*.

Loveg. Guarding the Gospel! Why what guarding can the gospel need? They must have a poor opinion of divine truths, who talk in this cold inconsistent manner. We are only *set upon our guard* when we *suspect an evil*. And what evil is there to be suspected from the gospel? What part of the gospel dispensation have I to guard? When the gospel freely holds forth the name, and salvation of Christ only, for the pardon and acceptance of sinners, how are we to guard it? It is to be hoped, not by contradicting; not by saying, that our repentance is to be mixed with the divine mercy, to render it effectual: If so, I have as much reason to love, and thank myself, as I have to love, and thank my Saviour: and while we lessen our obligations to love him, we certainly lessen our obligations to obey him; how then can the interest of holiness be promoted, by preaching in such a stile, so as to tempt the ruined sinner to keep away in despair? What motives can be stronger to create a spirit of loving obedience upon our hearts, beyond those encouraging promises of our free forgiveness, and acceptance, whereby we may

"draw near to God, and have grace given us, that we may go and sin no more?"

Wor. Yes, it is upon this very principle that they think the gospel should be guarded, "lest we continue in sin, that grace may abound."

Loveg. And so this inconsistent, cautious tribe of *guarders*, think they do credit to divine truths, by bringing forward the objection started, and which ever will be started by its enemies, in all ages of the church, while upon that very subject St. Paul shows, *how the gospel guards itself*: "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" But these people seem to me, to have no idea of the gospel, but as it is limited to the justification of our persons, through the redemption of Christ. Is not the sanctification of our natures, by the influence of the divine Spirit, another essential part of the gospel, whereby the blessing of personal holiness, is *absolutely* secured to all the redeemed of the Lord? and can we be tempted to live in sin, by receiving such a glorious salvation from sin.

Wor. I cannot see what we have to be afraid of, or to guard in all this.

Loveg. Why, I suppose we are to tell people, that as they are not to trust *too much* on the merits of Christ on the one hand, so they should be *aware* lest they trust too much on the work of the Spirit, on the other: as if living on the grace of the *Holy Spirit*, could feed their corruptions, and make them *unholy*.

Wor. One would suppose, what you frequently call the gospel of our "sanctification," operated by the rule of reverse; as though lectures on honesty, need to be guarded, lest they should direct us to be thieves; or lectures on chastity should teach us to be impure.

Loveg. I really do not know what they can mean by "guarding the gospel," unless it be a perverted gospel; and as perverted truth is nothing better than falsehood, so a perverted gospel, is no gospel at all. Some persons seem to think, though it be as contrary to truth, as light is to darkness, that the gospel is with-

in a hair's breadth of downright Antinomianism, which turns the holy truth of God into a licentious lie; whereas, nothing can be more inconsistent with truth, than that foul and filthy error. Am I in danger of *error*, while I receive *the truth*? or must I guard against *wickedness*, while I humbly submit to be ruled by that doctrine which is according to *godliness*? I wish all our worldly prudence about guarding truth, and preaching it *moderately*, or *soberly*, as they call it, may not lead to something much worse, by producing ignorance, and indifference, which must ultimately terminate in corrupting, or giving up the whole.

Wor. Well Sir, nobody will suspect you of such sort of false fears, though I am sure you are quite as practical as you are evangelical.

Loveg. Yes Sir, and I hope I shall always feel it my duty, to dwell upon the practice which such principles *must* ever produce; for although the Gospel needs no guarding, yet I should still call those unguarded preachers, who greatly injure the sacred cause, by such a neglect.

Wor. I think you good ministers of the gospel, have nothing to do, but to "contend earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints."

Loveg. Then Sir, we need not guard those holy truths, which God himself hath "delivered to the saints; and if delivered to the saints, it was designed of God, that we should be "sanctified by the truth." Thus, all this guarding the gospel seems to come home against the gospel itself. In my opinion, it is in itself, a most unguarded expression; no wonder if the bad consequences of these truths are suspected by others, while we seem to suspect them ourselves.

Wor. I do not know that Mr. Deliberate is by any means such a great "guarder of the gospel" as Mr. Legal-definition is. I believe he knows much more of the truth, and is therefore much less afraid of

preaching it, though his style of preaching renders him tedious and dull.

Loveg. When I was curate at Abley, there was a clergyman in these parts, who lived in a parish in your preaching, near to my honest warm-hearted friend Mr. Slapdash, called Mr. Slopdash; and he seemed to be just the reverse of Mr. Deliberate. For while Mr. Deliberate scarcely dares speak at all, but as he continues looking at every expression again, and again, lest it should be otherwise than the most judicious and correct; Mr. Slapdash without any consideration whatever, will be pouring out volleys of the most disgusting nonsense. Notwithstanding the cold, plodding, phlegmatic disposition of Mr. Deliberate, may render him a heavy preacher, yet I had rather a thousand times attend on the good sense of the one, than the mere rhapsody, and nonsense of the other.

Mrs. Wor. And so had I. But then it appears to me, that of two evils, I should only choose the less.

Mrs. Considerate asked Farmer Littleworth how he liked the sermon, and he said,—“ Ah madam, to my liking, our own dear minister *out-tops* them all. This gentleman has so many heads, and tails, and so many tops, and bottoms to his sermons, that we country folk can scarce know how to make him out.” And poor Thomas Newman said, while Mr. Deliberate was splitting his heads, that by attending to him, he thought his own head would have been split at the same time.

Loveg. Why, half the skill of preaching to a country congregation——

Wor. [Interrupts.] Aye, and to a city congregation too, for not one in ten of them is wiser than ourselves.

Loveg. I quite agree with you Sir. But I was going to observe, that half the skill of preaching is, to bring truth home to the lowest capacity of our hearers; and while we attempt to make them wise

unto salvation, the world will certainly call it "the foolishness of preaching;" but still it will be widely different from *foolish preaching*. While we can preach with "simplicity, and godly sincerity, and not with fleshly wisdom," we may expect the same blessing which attended the ministry of St. Paul. He tells us plainly, how he went to work: "And I, bretheren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech, and of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God; for I was determined to *know nothing* among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified; and my speech, and my preaching, was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power:" and what a noble reason he adds to all this, "lest your faith should stand in the wisdom of man, and not in the power of God."

Wor. But Sir, I think Mr. Deliberate does not aim at what some fulsome pretended orators suppose to be the excellency of speech or wisdom.

Loveg. I quite agree with you Sir; and I did not quote that passage from scripture as immediately levelling its meaning against one of his description. Mr. Deliberate is a good man, and a man of learning, and thought, and our natural dispositions all widely differ from each other.

Wor. Just so I conceive of matters. But I am so much interested to hear the result of your journey to Locksbury, that I must beg leave to interrupt the present conversation, and make some inquiries about that event.

Loveg. Oh Sir! the nearer the poor widow came towards Locksbury, the more her mind was agitated and distressed. I thought she would have lost her reason a second time.

Wor. I suppose that her feelings must have been keen indeed. I am almost afraid to ask, what was the result of the first interview.

Loveg. Sir, the people of the inn, where we alighted, immediately knew who she was, and there was an immediate buzz about the house; I therefore

requested, that she might be shown into some back room, where she sat, more agitated, and affected, than I can well express ; and there I left her while I went and apprised her father of her arrival. When I came into his house, and told him who I was, how he trembled, and wept, and in what strong terms of gratitude he expressed himself, for all the attention paid to his daughter ! He wanted to go with me immediately, to conduct her to his house, but I objected to this plan, as I thought this first interview, which was likely to be a very affecting one, had better not take place in a public house. He immediately saw the propriety of my objection ; it was therefore judged best, that I should return and conduct her to her father's house.

Mrs. Wor. Oh ! what a painful office this must have been ! I wish Sir Charles had been there to have seen the consequences of his abominable and brutal conduct.

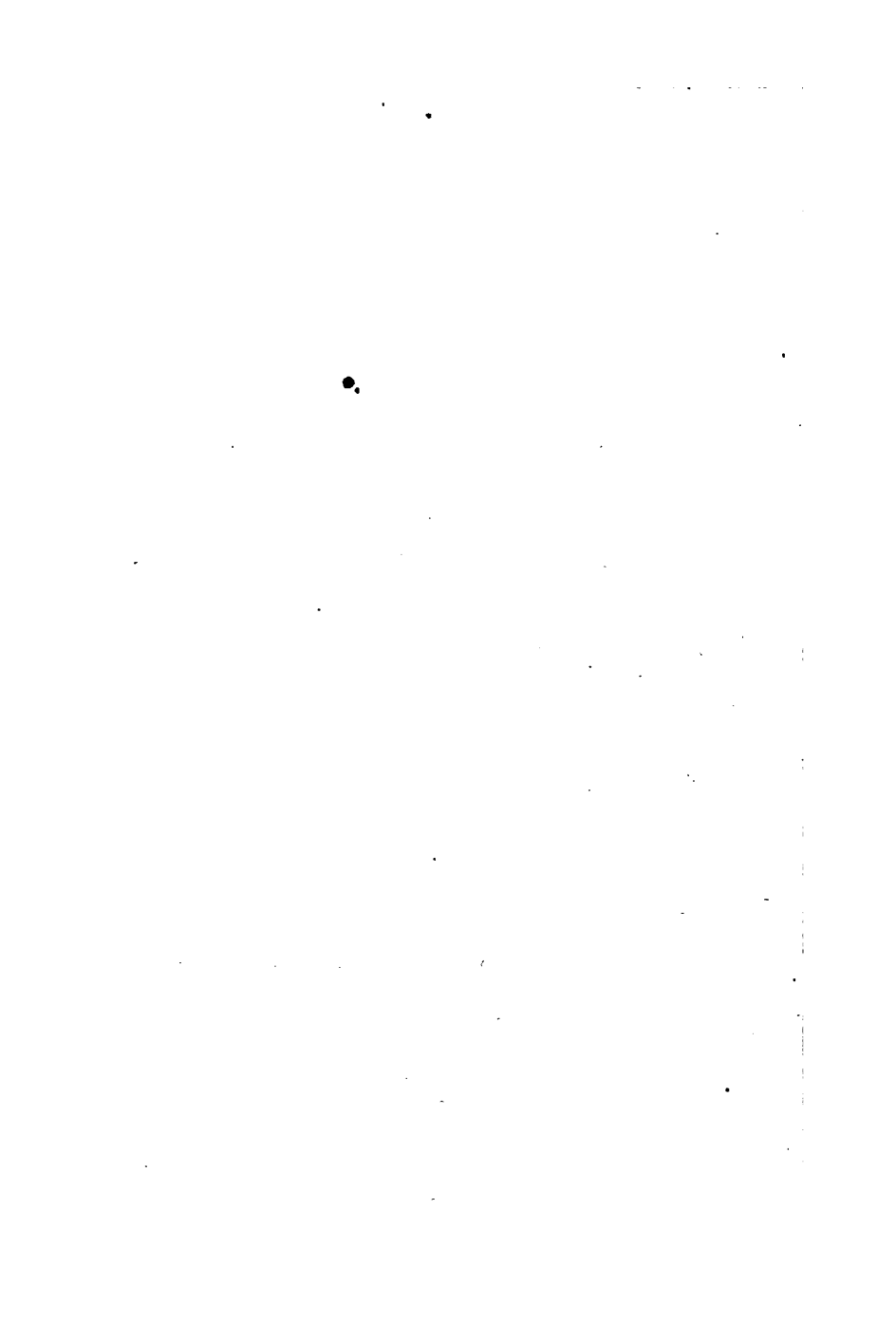
Loveg. Why Madam, it is supposed that miserable creature is now no more.

Mrs. Wor. What is he dead ?

Loveg. It is strongly reported about Locksbury, that soon after Mrs. Chipman left him, he went over to Ireland, where he thought it might be more convenient to assume another name ; and there, fighting a duel with one of the same stamp with himself, he was killed upon the spot.* But as for such monsters,

* Report at present only says, that after Sir Charles had worn out the credit of his own name in England, he went over to Ireland, where he assumed the name of Mr. M'Fury. There he met with a military wild Irishman, with whom he picked a quarrel about some of their wild intrigues ; on this account they met, and according to the style of our modern polite barbarians, (called however, among themselves, men of honour,) they fought a duel ; the Captain proved the better marksman, and shot Sir Charles nearly dead upon the spot. He had only time to utter two or three most profane expressions, and spoke no more.

Is it not, however, high time, that the magistracy of the nation should resume the dignity of their office ; and no longer suffer these umpires of their own disputes to proceed, without after-



DIALOGUE XXXIII.



MRS. CHIPMAN'S RETURN TO HER FATHER.

they are quite callous to all the fine feelings of natural affection, while sunk in the gratification of their mere brutal appetites. However, the scene, between Mrs. Chipman, and her father, was so effecting that it almost upset me.

Wor. It will be well if the bare recital of matters, does not upset us all : but we must hear it.

Loveg. When I returned, I told her how affectionately her father designed to receive her. She cried, "Had he treated me with severity, and contempt, that, I think I could have borne, for I know I have deserved it ; but oh, what I feel at the thought, that such a monster should be treated with so much affection and love, while I deserve to be abhorred by all !" It was some time before I could get her to move off her chair to attempt the walk ; and every step she took reminded me, of a criminal going to execution. Though I begged her to suppress the emotions of her mind as much as she could, yet the moment her father opened the door, she was down upon her knees, crying, " Oh my dear father, for God's sake forgive me, for Christ's sake forgive me !" He immediately stooped down and embraced her, and kissed her, and said, " My dear child, I have forgiven you—from the bottom of my heart, I have forgiven you." He attempted to raise her up, immediately she went off in an hysteric fit, and it was full half an hour before she could be brought to her recollection ; directly as she could speak, she began again to accuse herself of being her husband's murderer, for her ingratitude to her father, and for her brutality to her child. I then spoke rather sharply to her, and said, that if she

wards conferring upon them the dignity of the halter? I question if this honour twice or thrice conferred would not prove an effectual remedy to so terrible a disease.

When the whole race of such Duellers, find they are liable to be hanged as intentional murderers, for presuming to settle their disputes, excited by the mere freaks of passion, and generally in a drunken frolic, when they ought to appeal to the wholesome laws of the country, it will be much to the credit of a civilized nation.

had any regard to my advice, and her father's feelings, she must make no more use of that sort of language against herself; and especially being now, as we trusted, in a penitential state, the language of humble gratitude, would best suit her state: and I went to prayer.

Wor. And how was she after prayer?

Loveg. Somewhat more calm, but still very low and hysterical. I waved the subject as far as I could, and entered into conversation with Mr. Reader about the alteration of his views, as it respected spiritual matters; and I found his mind in a most pleasant state, of holy surprise at his former ignorance, compared with the views he now enjoyed of the gospel salvation. But while he inadvertently began to mention some of the blessed expressions which dropt from the dying lips of Mr. Chipman, the grief of the poor widow was rekindled almost as bad as ever. She sat sighing, and sobbing all the evening; but as I charged her to make no more of these vehement exclamations against herself, she said little, but wept much. At length she cried, "Father may I be permitted to see my dear child?" He answered, "My dear, you had better wait till to-morrow, till your spirits are a little more calm;" and in this advice she peaceably acquiesced.

Wor. But I should suppose, she had another difficulty to surmount, in returning back to her husband's house.

Loveg. Oh Sir! the very mention of her return thither, quite overset her again.

Mrs. Wor. And it was enough to overset her. What woman who was once blessed with such a husband, who had lost his life through her brutish conduct, could bear to return and find him absent? And what sleep could she expect, while lying on the bed she had so treacherously forsaken; and on which her husband had died of a broken heart?

Loveg. No doubt, but such must have been her reflections, and painful ones they truly were. Slaves

of sin, have bad wages for their slavery. But when Mr. Reader mentioned whether she chose to stop a day, or two with him, or go to her own bouse, her grief became nearly as excessive as before. She cried, "Oh! that I could but have lived a thousand miles from the place, which brings to my recollection so strongly, every circumstance of my most vile and treacherous conduct! But if my return should be the cause of breaking my own heart with grief, it will become me to submit to the most righteous judgment of God, should I be carried from the same bed with a broken heart, to my dear husband's grave." Mr. Reader said, "My dear Jemima, you shall not leave my house till your spirits are more recruited: but I will send for your child to-morrow morning, and you shall see it." Thus matters were settled; and after family prayer, I left Mrs. Chipman in possession of the bed designed for me, and got myself accommodations at the inn; and sad accommodations they were.

Wor. What sort of accommodations then had you?

Loveg. Oh Sir! the bed was good enough, but in the next room, there was a meeting of some club: and the partition being very thin, I was obliged to submit to hear all their noise, and nonsense, intermixed with language the most blasphemous and obscene, till about two o'clock in the morning; and their horrid songs which they began singing, when they were half drunk, were worse than all. However at length, the landlord came in, and begged them to break up. What a mercy to be redeemed from the filthy conversation of the wicked!

Wor. None of these things would have been allowed, had honest Edward, of the Golden Lion, been the keeper of the inn. I will engage for it, you would have rather been accommodated with some good, clean straw in a stable.

Loveg. A thousand times: how much preferable the company of natural brute beasts, than the company of those who are brutalised by sin. But as it

was found an insurmountable difficulty to get Mrs. Chipman home, at least while I was there, I afterwards slept at her house, while she continued to occupy the bed designed for me at her father's.

Wor. It would have been a desirable event, if she could have surmounted that difficulty while you were there, that she might have been persuaded to have engaged herself in some family concerns.

Loveg. Sir, for the present, the sight of any of her old acquaintance, fills her with immediate consternation. She has kept herself a close prisoner ever since she entered into her father's house.

Wor. How then did she act on the Sunday you preached there?

Loveg. Oh Sir! she was nearly as much affected as she was on the Wednesday evening, when we first arrived: her anxiety to attend militated so strongly against the sense of shame.—I therefore thought it best to come to advise her father, to lay his injunctions upon her not to come to Church on that Sunday, as she would have been a public spectacle to all the congregation.

Mrs. Wor. Certainly it was the best advice, though the shame she felt, is neither to be lamented, nor wondered at. Indeed I always thought this the best evidence, that her repentance was genuine.

Loveg. That it certainly was. The Apostle speaks of those things, whereof the really converted christian is now *ashamed*; and that they shall be made to know that it is "even a *shame* to speak of those things done of them in secret." I even suspect the genuine repentance of those, who seem to express themselves with a degree of carnal indifference, respecting their old sins, under a vain confidence, that they are now forgiven. I wish such sort of believers would but recollect, that there is such a grace as "Repentance towards God," as well as "Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." I hope, notwithstanding, Mrs. Chipman will soon have sufficient evidence to believe that God has forgiven her; though I am sure she will never forgive herself.

Mrs Wor. But how did she bear the sight of her child, which according to promise, was to be introduced the next morning?

Loveg. Why Madam, while we were at breakfast, Mr. Reader went out and brought it in; one of the most lovely, cheerful babes, I think I ever beheld, springing in its nurse's arms, and sweetly smiling at its grandfather. He took and placed it upon the mother's lap, she looked at it, watered it with her tears, affectionately embraced it, and then began quoting that text which had so impressed her mind: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb!" and then quite fainted away. The child was taken from her, and as soon as she was able, she was led up into her chamber, where she continued most of the day.

Wor. What misery this poor creature has entailed upon her own mind. But did she make any further efforts to surmount her feelings, as it respected her child?

Loveg. Yes Sir, I believe several. But every attempt she made, was with the same cutting reflections against herself. Sir, we who are blessed with children, and with a parental love towards them, may judge what she felt, when she was recovered by the grace of God, from the brutalised state of mind which possessed her, while she was captivated by that unprincipled monster of iniquity. However, towards the latter end of my stay, she would now and then attempt to smile on her child, while every smile returned by the child, would be sure to bring a fresh tear from her eye.

Wor. It will be well, if the child does not lose both its parents, by the same event.

Loveg. Sometimes I fear this will be the case; at others times I have my hopes that she will still survive her grief. I requested Mr. Reader to set her about some household affairs, and to try to divert her attention by the use of the needle, and this was done with some success. Though oftentimes, while

she was at her work, she would bedew it with her tears, till completely overcome by the recollection of her former misconduct; she would then entirely lay her work aside, and again give way to the extreme grief of her mind.

Wor. It must have been exceedingly distressing to her poor father, to have seen her overpowered by such excessive grief.

Loveg. The grief of the parent, was nearly equal to that of the daughter, though he exemplified astonishing patience on the occasion. All his affection seems entirely restored: he now loves her as much as ever he once could blame her. It is amazing, what the forgiving love, and converting grace of God does, on the hearts of all the children of God.

Wor. Did she not in any degree recover her spirits while you were there.

Loveg. I humbly trust she did: there were such cheering prospects of good, which attended the divine services on the Sunday, as revived the hearts of all; though my final departure from Locksbury, exceedingly depressed her spirits.

Wor. That must have been a very trying moment between you both.

Loveg. I am sure Sir, I could not have sustained the concluding interview without a very considerable injury to her feelings and my own; I therefore took my farewell by sending her a letter, and at the same time, I composed for her a penitential hymn.

Mrs Wor. Do Sir, let us see a copy of it.

Loveg. Oh madam, my poor rhymes scarcely deserve the name of poetry; If I had by me a correct copy, it would never be worth your perusal.

Mrs. Wor. Leave us to judge of that, we must hear it.

After much persuasion, Mr. Lovegood submitted. He is a man of uncommon modesty, though of considerable ability. He lives much as Moses did, on the mount with God: and as this made Moses's face to shine, "though he wist not that his face shone,"

when he came down from the mount, to do the work of God below, so also it is with Mr. Lovegood, though in my opinion, he shines less as a poet, than as a divine. However, from some short-hand notes he had in his pocket-book, he delivered the following hymn, supposing it to be the genuine experience before God, of an humbled sinner of her description, panting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

THE HYMN.

And must I sink beneath my load,
By weighty guilt borne down?
How can I bear the heavy rod,
Of God's eternal frown?

Who can thy righteous power withstand,
Or who thy wrath restrain?
But mercy still withholds thy hand,
And lets me here remain.

Why should'st thou yet forbear to slay,
If not inclin'd to spare?
Shall I then fling all hope away,
And yield to wild despair?

This were my sad account to swell,
Too big to be forgiven:
All sins lead down to death and hell,
But this shuts out from heav'n.

No: still I'll hope for grace divine,
That mercy may abound;
Others, with guilt as vile as mine,
Have still thy mercy found.

Peter deny'd his blessed Lord,
With base blaspheming breath;
Paul rag'd against the heavenly word,
And hunted saints to death.

What though a Magdalene had been
Of sev'n foul fiends possess'd?
Yet Peter, Paul, and Magdalene,
Were with forgiveness bless'd.

And why not I, this grace obtain?
Did not my Saviour die?

Or did he shed his blood in vain,
To ransom such as I?

O! let me hear thy gracious call;
"Come thou, with guilt oppress'd,
"On me let all thy burthens fall,
"I give the weary rest."

The door I trust is open still,
Whate'er my guilt has been,
And since 'tis my Redeemer's will,
I'll humbly enter in.

Mrs. Wor. Well Sir, I dare say, we are all of the opinion, that you need not have been so much ashamed of your poetry; But oh! what a mercy to be kept from the evil propensities of our corrupted hearts, and to be under the sanctifying influences of God's most blessed Spirit.

Loveg. Yes madam, the blessings we enjoy in this world, in being so graciously converted, so mercifully preserved, and kept, are inexpressible; in the next they will be infinite.

Mrs. Wor. Oh Sir! how shall we sufficiently express ourselves, for the kind providence which sent you among us? Mr. Worthy, and I, both felt we wanted something, but we knew not what.

This observation of Mrs. Worthy coming home rather personally to Mr. Lovegood, rendered the conversation desultory, though still edifying. It turned upon the following subject, "What is there, which thou hast not received?" But as the author aims at an abridgement of every subject, remembering the old Greek proverb, "A great book, a great evil;" he begs leave to close the present Dialogue, and resume the subject, when the conversation may be more to the point.

DIALOGUE XXXIV.

THE FAMILY OF THE WORTHYS, AND
MR. LOVEGOOD.

THE CHARACTER OF MR FRIBBLE, AND SOME FURTHER NARRATION OF EVENTS, OCCASIONED BY MR. LOVEGOOD'S VISIT TO LOCKSBURY.

MR. LOVEGOOD dreaded personal praise, more than any thing. Having therefore retired for a few minutes, to break the chain of conversation which terminated the last dialogue, though so deservedly to his praise, he again returned, and thus the conversation recommenced.

Wor. Well Sir, you have now told us all you know respecting Mrs. Chipman : we must next request you, to tell us how it fared with you on the Sunday.

Loveg. Sir, you should first ask me, how it fared with me on the Saturday.

Wor. Begin where you like. But we want to know how you succeeded with Mr. Fribble, according to the dying request of Mr. Chipman.

Loveg. Oh Sir, after Mr. Reader had sent him word of my arrival, he came and called on us. I found him as complete a puppy as ever I met with in my life ; and he invited me and Mr. Reader with a vast deal of Affectation, (for his father it seems was a dancing master,) to tea with him, as he was pleased to express himself, on the Saturday evening.

Wor. Did you accept the invitation ?

Loveg. I conceived it was not in my power to say no : but I told Mr. Reader, it could be only on the condition that he should go with me ; and we had such a dose !

Wor. I suppose you found him to be a most curious sprig of divinity, according to the fashionable taste of the day.

Mrs. Wor. How could you hit it off together ?

Loveg. Why Madam, he first began bowing and scraping, with such an abundance of compliments, that I could not tell what to do with them.

Mrs. Wor. Not with one half of them, I suppose.

Loveg. No—nor with one quarter of them, madam.

Wor. After the compliments were all over, how did you proceed ?

Loveg. Sir, he began chattering away at a most extraordinary rate ; first, upon one topic, then upon another ; I think I never heard so much incoherent chatter before. But the first thing which struck me, was the furniture of his room. On one peg were hung a pair of skais, with red Morocco straps ; on another his violin ; at another place his bows and arrows were exhibited, as he was a member of an archer's club ; over his chimney-piece were piled, his gun and other accoutrements for that sport, with two or three dog-collars ; then there was his backgammon-table, his cribbage board, and among other pretty play things, he had his battledores, and shuttle-cocks.

Wor. From the furniture of his room, you might easily guess the furniture of his head.

Loveg. I thought that was more easily described, by what appeared on two or three shelves of books, which he called his library ; containing little, that I could find, but a parcel of plays, loose poetry, and empty novels.

Wor. Had he no books of divinity ?

Loveg. Sir, he had a few trumpery pamphlets, and among the rest, he had one book somewhat bet-

DIALOGUE XXXIV.



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MR FRIBBLE'S ROOM,

ter bound than the others, called "The Religion of a polite gentleman."

Wor. In the name of wonder, what sort of a book can that be?

Loveg. I should suppose a jumble of affectation, and religious compliments. I asked him however out of curiosity, what were its contents. He directly answered, he had only read a *little in the middle of it*; but that the author plainly proved, that no gentleman should be over morose in his religion, and that this was supposed to be the fault of St. Paul, for that he was bread a Sadducee.

Wor. A Sadducee! Did he not mean a Pharisee?

Loveg. I suppose he might, but that he did not know the one from the other.

Wor. And had he no other religious publications besides?

Loveg. Sir, he had a book called "Thesaurus Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ," written by one Ecton.

Mrs. Wor. Sir, we do not understand what these Latin titles to books of divinity mean.

Loveg. Why Madam, it means, "The Treasury of the English Church."

Mrs. Wor. I suppose then he had one good book at least; for in the Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, there is a treasure of divinity, remarkably good, and sound: and it is wonderful how well calculated those writings against popery, are to confute the modern protestantism of the day, as you Sir, (to Mr. Lovegood) have often remarked.

Loveg. O Madam, Ecton's Thesaurus, contains nothing but an account of the worth of different livings, and all other church preferments. If I were to give it another name, it should be, *A Guide to preferment-Hunters*; though they commonly call it among themselves, *The Parson's Bible*.

Wor. What could be the style of the conversation of this poor creature?

Loveg. Sir, the most empty, and frivolous imaginable. I did not at first, (according to Mr. Reader's

desire,) introduce religion too hastily, lest I should forfeit the use of the pulpit; he supposed that I had not much more to do with it, than himself; only he conceived I might be of a more grave, and phlegmatic turn of mind; and that I was a *fine orator*, as he called it.

Wor. I should suppose this idea respecting your turn of mind, might have had some check upon his frothy talk.

Loveg. Not in the least; his chatter was incessant. He first began asking me, if I lived in a good sporting country. I waived it, and said, that I was fond of my study, that I had a large family, and a good deal to do in my parish; and that I had really no time for such amusements. He then said, he confessed he was of another turn; and that he could not see the need of *muzzing* over a set of books all the day long. Then he went on telling me what a wonderful deal of game he had killed that season, with one Esquire Madcap, a strange wild young fellow, who lives in those parts. Then all at once he cried, "Oh sir! you really came a day after the fair; for Mr. Madcap, our young Esquire, who lives about three miles off, treated us with a horse-race; he is a merry fellow I can assure you; and really Sir, we had charming sport." I answered, I supposed it might be to them that liked it. But hints of that sort were of no avail; for on he went, crying, "Really Sir, between the pleasures of the horse course in the mornings, and the card parties, and balls in the evenings, we were all alive!"

Wor. Did you not tell him, it was much to be lamented, that the people of his spiritual charge, could not be kept alive, without the aids of cards, balls, and horse races?

Loveg. Sir, I said to him, what was their life, would be my death; and he immediately cried, "*O my stars and garters!* I think you were born under a strange planet."

Mrs. Wor. A strange one indeed, I suppose to him ; but how did he proceed ?

Loveg. Madam, he said I entertained very different notions of religion to Mr. Archdeacon Wildblood, for that he not only was at the horse race, but that he rode his own horse ; yet he did not *sport a solo*, for that another clergyman, young Bob Dapper, rode his horse as well as the Archdeacon.

Wor. Indeed, this is worse than bad. What must be expected from a church, while some among its very dignitaries are not masked even with common decency ! But was the rattle of this empty creature correctly stated ?

Loveg. Sir, when I asked Mr. Reader how far this circumstance was true, he told me, that an Archdeacon, known by the name of Jack Wildblood, actually rode his own horse ; and that before common decency was insulted, by turning *Jack* into a *Parson*, and afterwards into an Archdeacon, he was an officer in the army ; and that after having made his calculations, he discovered from family connexions, it was probable that things *spiritual*, would pay him better than things *temporal*.*

Report also says, that while on the horse course, his stirrup unfortunately broke, and that he *swore* at the mob, most profanely to get out of the way, lest, as he could not manage his horse, he should ride over them ; but his excuse it seems is, he does not swear as the Archdeacon, but as the Captain.†

Wor. We all remember an anecdote respecting a certain German Prince-bishop, who was much given

* Report says, some of these military *parsons* are still on half pay.

† If the reader objects to the above, supposing that circumstances must have been exaggerated, I answer, would to God they could be contradicted ! But he may be assured, that however bad things may be with us, they are actually worse in Ireland. I was told, when once there, of a *Dean* who is as complete a jockey, and as finished a Jack Wildblood, as the person who is represented above.

to swearing ; and when accused of it, especially as being such a great indecency in a Bishop, his answer was, he did not swear as the bishop, but as the prince. And the next question naturally asked was, if the Prince went to the devil for swearing, what would become of the Bishop ? Now just the same question rests between the Captain and the Archdeacon. But how could this poor brainless creature run on at such a rate ?

Loveg. Sir, he ran on as fast as ever, exposing himself and his fraternity at a strange rate ; though it seems, that Mr. Reader played poor young Bob Dapper a sad trick.

Wor. What was that ?

Loveg. Why, the worthy old gentleman, feeling himself offended at the loose conduct of these giddy chaps, made a sermon on this text, “ So run that ye may obtain,” in which he lashed these abominable indecencies, pretty severely. And this sermon young Bob Dapper bought of Mr. Reader, who sold it him under the idea that it was *suitable to the season*. He supposed it to be a thanksgiving sermon, suitable after a plentiful harvest ; whereas Mr. Reader composed it as being a *suitable reproof*, during the season of such an abominable outrage against all the rules of decency, and good order.* Poor Bob therefore,

* Were the ministers of the church of Scotland, or of many other Protestant churches, to act a part nearly as inconsistent, they would soon be brought into better order. If it be added, that it is to be hoped such instances are rare, it is answered, it is much to be lamented that they exist at all. The evil consequences of these things, are incalculable. If a set of such clergy as these are found to complain that a set of preaching Cobblers, Barbers, and Tailors, not having priestly authority, interrupt them in what they call their duty, let them look at home for the cause, mend their own manners, universally preach, and live the doctrines of the church of England, and see if these Cobblers, at least the most of them, will not stick to their stalls ; the Barbers keep to their blocks, and the Tailors to their goose.

Some talk of persecuting these poor creatures : but before they begin upon the business, it may be well if they would first ask themselves, if an innocent, well intentioned man, with a few

after having procured the sermon, came home from his sports, so late on the Saturday night, or rather so early on the Sunday morning, that he had no time to read it over, but trusted entirely to the good writing of Mr. Reader. Thus this redoubtable *spiritual* jockey, who was once "moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon him the sacred office of the ministry," took out this sermon and began to read it.

Wor. And I should suppose, the whole of it was a most pointed declamation against his own conduct.*

good brains in his head, and the grace of God in his heart, be not likely to give better instruction in point of religion, than such a set, so ordained, and from such motives, as are too generally sent to fill the church, and then determine if it would be wise, or politic, or just, to put such preachers under the castigation of the law. If the plea be, that folly, and enthusiasm ought to be corrected, the answer is, leave it alone, and it will correct itself. But from what has already been exhibited, others may deserve chastisement, as much as the wildest enthusiast in the land.

* During the time of Mr. Madcap's revel, Mr. Reader mentioned another circumstance which occurred, and which equally proved the inconsistency of these things, as belonging to the character of a Christian, and in a ten-fold more aggravated point of view, when exhibited in the character of a Christian Minister.

Soon after the business of the horse-race, and all concomitant diversions were concluded, the bishop of the diocese came about those parts to visit and confirm. Previous to this, he very properly sent his circular advice among the clergy, to put into the hands of the young candidates for confirmation, some small devotional exercises, by way of impressing their minds with a suitable improvement on that occasion. Among others who came to take a more moderate and *sanctified peep* at these fooleries, was the Rev. Mr. Demure; and yet, that he might act consistently with the bishop's direction, while he had been enjoying these things according to the real appetite of his mind, (like a man who would now and then, indulge himself with a little carion as a rarity,) he wrote to Mr. Reader on the subject, supposing that as he could make their sermons for them, he could also make their devotions. Mr. Demure's letter, and Mr. Reader's answer to it, may not be unacceptable, as it may throw a farther light on the same subject.

"Sir,

"According to the laudable advice of our worthy Diocesan, we are desired to lay before the young people who may be judg-

Loveg. Sir, Mr. Reader told me, that he laid it on as thick as ever he could, and thus poor Bob, after a short introduction, began exclaiming against horse races, as the worst of *revells*; and that "revellings and such like," were strongly prohibited: asking the question, how any but the friends of debauchery and riot, could sanction such *revells* by their presence? and how Christians, who take the Bible as the model of their Christianity, could presume to patronise,

ed fit for confirmation, some small devotional tracts, that they may afterwards be properly instructed, how to do their duty, and to *say their prayers*. I apply to you Sir, for assistance, as you know this week we have been pretty much engaged in seeing our friends, who came in great abundance to partake of the amusements of Mr. Madcap's horse-race, so that we have not had sufficient time to attend to the pastoral admonition, his lordship has condescended to send us; and as you can make such excellent sermons for us, I have no doubt but you can make some devotions also, which we mean to get printed, and distributed as directed by his lordship. Though I am sorry to say, that some of the clergy did not properly attend to the rules of decency, and good order, yet I will assure you Sir, others of us, (*thank the Almighty*), considered our duty, and came home in due time, so as not to suffer our innocent diversions, to interrupt our devotions.

"I am Sir,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"PETER DEMURE."

Mr. Reader, not a little offended at the inconsistent, sanctimonious pretensions of Mr. Demure, returned the following answer:

"REV. SIR,

"I have received your proposal to draw out some devotional exercises, for the young candidates for confirmation.

"As to myself, had I inclination, I confess, under present circumstances, I wish to decline the work; as I am now satisfied it is high time for the clergy to convene themselves together, and enlarge the plan, by composing such sort of devotion as will be suitable to their diversions, that the world may be convinced respecting them, (for they begin to be much suspected,) that according to a scripture rule "whatever they do in word, and deed, they do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him."

"Now what I conceive will prove a high recommendation to this publication is, that the plan will be entirely new; for though it has been said, there is nothing new under the sun, I believe

by their presence; such exhibitions of mad and wanton riot, which so notoriously abounded during these seasons of entire dissipation? Then poor Bob again cried out against himself; "Feign to yourselves, how preposterous would be the sight, should that very sacred character, of all others the most morti-

devotional exercises of this sort, have never as yet made their appearance; while at the same time, it will prove a capital criterion of the *innocency* of the diversions themselves. Whatsoever we do, that we can ask God's blessing upon, will never do us harm.

"First, for the mottos to this publication; and these will be best found in the Bible;

"Pray without ceasing.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto, with all perseverance.

"Continuing instant in prayer.

"Now from these texts, the real Christian is at least directed to continue in a perpetual aptitude for prayer.

"To the *pious* compilers of this new publication, I beg leave to recommend the composing some forms of prayer on the following occasions.

"A devout supplication before going to a tragedy.

"Another before going to a comedy.

"A short form of prayer, to be said before a farce.

"Another prayer also may be necessary before going to a harlequin entertainment, or a masquerade.

"Then let the *reverend* composers of this new work, direct their *devout* disciples, not to omit any of the accustomed forms before going to bed; but as a proof of their proper gratitude to almighty God, for such *blessed innocent amusements*, let them add a thanksgiving prayer, which for the sake of avoiding prolixity, may be made equally suitable to each of the above mentioned occasions; and then the title to such a piece of devotion will run thus, 'A Thanksgiving Prayer, to be said after returning from a Tragedy, Comedy, Farce, Harlequin Entertainment, or a Masquerade.'

"And as short titles sound best, I next advise a Puppet Show Prayer, that people's heads may be made wiser, and their hearts better, by their *devout* attendance thereon.

"As children also take much delight in scenery, such as dancing dolls, &c. whether they be large or small, it might not be amiss to make a *religious* use of these pretty *jump-about*s, for the good of the rising generation, by never suffering them to go to a puppet show, a play, or a ball, unless they can at least say *pretty pat*, the first of the three things their *devout* God-fathers and God-mothers engaged for them in baptism, *that they should renounce the devil, and all his works, the pomps, and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.* But

fied, and devoted to God, exhibit as a *public Jockey*. for the diversion, and scoff of the most wicked, and profane:" asking them, Whether they had taken the model of their religion from the wanton tricks of a set of heathens at their Olympic games, or from the holy word of God?

Wor. Oh poor Bob! how he was taken in! how could he go on?

Loveg. It seems he hummed, and hawed, and stut-tered, and stammered; took out his handkerchief and wiped his face, again and again; turned over two or three leaves at a time, but found it all just as bad: got out of the pulpit as fast as he could,

to finish the plan of this new intended Manual, which I would recommend to be short, that it may be snug and portable for the pocket, as also fit to be bound up with the *Week's Preparation*, or the *Companion to the Altar*, should there not also be a proper prayer made before going into a ball-room, and another after returning from it? A prayer also may be necessary before a card assembly, together with a few holy ejaculations, to be said between the deals. I would also recommend having a huntsman's prayer, and a horse racer's prayer, especially for such of the reverend clergy as commence their own jockies, that the Almighty might protect them from breaking their necks, while they are exposing the pure, and holy religion of the gospel, to the ridicule, and contempt of the profane people of the world. I lastly ask the question, if those amusements which will not bend into devotion, are fit for the clergy, as their very office demands it of them. that they should be devout at all times? and whether any recreations can, in any wise, be admissible among them, but such as leave them at full liberty to devote themselves to God, and for the people's good? Wishing that you, and all the clergy, may be as much a credit to their office, as their office itself would then be a credit to them.*

"I am,

"Rev. Sir,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"JAMES READER."

It may easily be supposed that Mr. Reader lost not a little of his custom in the business of sermon-making. Mr. Demure, however *charitably* concluded, that he was a little deranged through family misfortunes, and so it passed off.

* Some of these thoughts appeared in a former publication, which was not intended for extensive circulation.

and swore he would tell the Archdeacon, what a trick that *sanctified* fellow, old Reader, had put upon him.

Wor. How in the world could he face his parishioners after this?

Loveg. Oh Sir, he has but few of them to face. Men of this cast are sure to empty their churches; but it should seem, all his comrades had something to say to him; one asked him, Who made his sermon for him? Another wondered, how he came so dreadfully to quarrel with himself? A third asked him, if his great-grandfather was not an old Puritan, and whether he was not so much in a hurry as to take up some of the leaves of one of his old *long winded* sermons? It seems, poor Bob laughed it off as well as he could. And thus ended this most disgraceful farce.

Mrs. Wor. Could Mr. Fribble approve of the conduct of Bob, and the Archdeacon?

Loveg. Madam, he confessed, that Mr. Archdeacon Wildblood went rather a little too far, but that the clergy were *flesh and blood* as well as others; and that one of his best sermons was written upon this text: "We also are men of like passions with you." And when I told him how dangerous it was to interpret the Scriptures according to the coarse, vulgar sound of words, as we might thereby entirely pervert them from their original most holy sense, and design; he cried, "I beg your pardon Sir, but why may not my notions of that text, be as good as yours?"

Wor. Could he then be so weak as to suppose, that our Lord's first Apostles might be as wicked as a set of heathens, by having the like corrupted passions with others; and especially, when they came to preach the pure, and holy dispensation of the gospel, which directs and enables us, to lay aside all our impure desires, and to "perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord?"

Loveg. I suppose he had not thought, as it related

to the connexion of the words, that the apostles were only intreating the poor heathens, not to worship them as gods. But I have heard before now, that the same passage has been pressed into the service of *licentiousness*, by these inconsistent preachers of *morality*.

Wor. Instead of being *preachers of morality*, what better are such, than mere *apologisers for sensuality*? But what had he to say for himself?

Loveg. Sir, he said he thought the text might be taken *two* ways; yet as to himself, he had no great notion of frightening people by being "righteous over much;" though for his own part, he was very sorry people did not keep Good Friday, more strictly than they had done of late years;* and that these were the sentiments of his father, and mother, before him.

Wor. What could you say to all this rattle?

Loveg. Indeed Sir, he gave me no time to say any thing, for he next began chattering away about the balls, and card-parties, they have in the town, during the winter season; and then observed, how impossible it was to spend a set of long dull nights, one after another, without something to prevent jovial minds from being *hipped to death*. Then he directly asked me, what where my favourite games at cards? but instead of waiting for my answer, which by the bye, would have puzzled me, he began crying out about a Miss Peg Prim, a famous dancer in their town; and how she moved like an angel; and though Mr. Reader cautioned me against religious topics with him, yet I could not but observe, that I did not think a set of silly Misses in a ball-room, moved like angels.

Wor. How did he take your hints?

Loveg. Oh Sir! the shatter-brained creature took no notice of my remarks; but went on chattering

*The author is as much, for keeping Good Friday, as Mr. Fribble, notwithstanding the superstitious abuse of the day among some.

away about what an elegant skaiter young Mr. Dapper was, and that though he was reckoned a pretty good *dab* at it himself, yet how glad he should be if he could but exhibit in the same manner; and how he and young Dapper, one rainy day, when they could do nothing else, played at battledore and shuttlecock, and that they kept up the shuttlecock two thousand and fourteen times, before they let it drop; and that they performed this wonderful feat within the space of twenty minutes, and then cried—"Was not that clever?"

Wor. Some people are children all the days of their lives. One would have thought he had scarcely left off whipping his top, or driving his hoop. But is he not a great man for archery, also?

Loveg. He is fond of every thing that will introduce him to show his empty airs among the giddy, and the gay. But at length, I thought my patience would have been quite exhausted: for after tea, he took down his fiddle, and began playing with his tweedle-dum, and tweedle-dee, and cried, "This is the first air my father taught me." Then he said, "Did you ever hear that charming fellow, Giardini?" he is certainly the first violin player in the kingdom." And when I observed, I never heard of that gentleman's name before, he exclaimed, "Odds bobs! I think you know nobody;" and then on he went, skipping, and fiddling about the room like a monkey; and would, every now-and-then, be asking me how I liked this, and how I liked that; and when I said that none of them suited my taste, he cried out, "By Jove Sir, you seem to like nothing!" I just gave him the hint, that I supposed he principally read heathen authors, as he had been taught to swear by their gods; and immediately Mr. Reader took up the cudgels for me, by saying, I was fond of such conversation, as had in it something that was rational, and instructive. So he hung up his fiddle, and left off skipping about the room, and sat down.

Wor. I fear he was set upon a hard task, if he

was only to talk about that which was rational, and instructive.

Loveg. Why directly upon this, he began complimenting me upon the supposed powers of my oratory because I had persuaded Mrs. Chipman, though once so bad a woman, to renounce her connexion with Sir Charles; and how much the curiosity of the people was raised; and what a fine sermon they expected from me; and that there was one great orator about those parts, called Dr. Puff; and that he himself had done all in his power to make himself such an orator, by reading over Shakspeare's plays, and by studying Mr. Garrick's directions for reading the Common Prayer; yet he never could come up to the Doctor: and when I began telling him, that the change accomplished was not done by my oratory, but by the grace of God, he directly, with a great deal of complaisance, replied, "O surely Sir! it was by the grace of God, and your oratory put together."

Wor. I dare say he would have chattered with you upon any subject you chose.

Loveg. I suppose he would; for Mr. Reader says, the poor, vain thing, is very good tempered. However, he entertained us for a while with his history of Sir Charles Dash; that he was once in company with him, but that he was not in the habit of telling those great people, what was their duty; that his mother, Lady Dash, was still living; and that she was a great church-goer; and how mad the minister of the parish was at her, for being almost the only one who came to Wednesday, and Friday prayers, when he wanted to drop them: that she scarce ever missed the sacrament, and that she was much stricter in her religion than people are now-a-days. Then all at once, he burst out, and observed, "The clergy of our day, seem to differ about how strict we should be in our religion; pray, what are your notions on that point?" And when I began to tell him of St. Paul's account of the Christian min-

ister, and the Christian ministry ; he again immediately interrupted me by crying, " Upon my word and honour Sir, I confess I do not pretend to understand St. Paul ; and I know some of the clergy who are of opinion, that people would have been quite wise enough in their religion, if we had only the four Gospels, without any of the Epistles."

Wor. I remember some years ago, that a vehement, anonymous pamphlet, made its appearance against the writings and character of St. Paul, recommending to the bishops, that all the New Testament should be suppressed, excepting the four Gospels ; as all the Epistles, especially those of St. Paul, had a tendency to promote a spirit of enthusiasm, and methodism as he called it, throughout the land ; and this book he dedicated to one of our bishops.*

Wor. How could you answer such a mere rattle ?

Loveg. Really Sir, he saved me all that trouble ; for he had no sooner said one thing, but without waiting for an answer, he would start something else, quite foreign to the subject. All at once he cried, " Oh Sir ! as you come from near Mapleton, perhaps you may know Mr. Jackadandy. He is my first cousin : our mothers were two sisters, the two Miss Prattles, that lived somewhere about those parts before they were married." I gravely said, Yes, I have heard there is such a young clergyman who lives in the next parish to Dr. Orderly. Mr. Fribble immediately cried, " Dr. Orderly ! aye, Dr. Orderly ! what a queer old *quiz* of a fellow he is ! he always puts me in mind of *old square toes*. I suppose he would not put his foot into a ball-room for all the world ; and I am told, that he will not speak to my cousin, because he loves a little *harmless mirth*, he is such a *precise old codger* ; and they say his Curate, Mr. Sedate, is just such another.

* I remember this horrid production made its appearance about forty years ago, and was dedicated to Dr. Hinchcliffe, a late bishop of Petersburg.

Now you do not think it necessary that we should be so strict as all that: and I have a notion Sir, you are a little strict in your way; though I can assure you, such strict notions in religion will not do for the people of our town."

Wor. How could you bear to hear this frothy chap run on at such a rate?

Loveg. Really Sir, I could not bear it, I therefore only spoke a few words in vindication of the respectable old Doctor, and turned him over to Mr. Reader.

Wor. And how did Mr. Reader deal with him?

Loveg. Sir, he talked to him far beyond my expectation, in a very serious and appropriate manner indeed. And glad enough we both were, after having been pestered with his nonsense for near an hour and an half, to make our escape.

Wor. I suppose Mr. Reader's views of such ministers are completely altered.

Loveg. Altered indeed! He wonders at his ignorance, that such miserable bits of vanity should ever have been esteemed by him, as ministers of the word of God! and how he laments the pitiable state of that town, so awfully deprived of all that is necessary to their spiritual good!

Wor. And what a pitiable state the Church must be in, when such miserable creatures are appointed as her spiritual guides, and are afterwards permitted to continue in that office! Who in the world, with conscience, and common sense, could continue under such a ministry! Many an application have I lately received, requesting my assistance towards building Dissenting Chapels in different places; and however I may love the Church, I shall begin to think my money better spent than ever, for such purposes, if a set of better ministers can but be provided in another line, for the general good. Should any event in Providence remove you from us, a circumstance we should have greatly to lament: and were we to meet with such a successor as Mr. Fribble of Locksbury, I

could now never submit to a double starvation, both of body and soul, within the stone walls of our deserted parish church, as was the case while Mr. Deadman was our parish minister, when there were scarcely any to hear, and nothing to be heard. But let me not interrupt you in your story.

Loveg. Blessed be God, all this produced good, notwithstanding ; for I urged seriously on Mr. Reader, the necessity of considering the lamentable state of the town, and to open his school-room, at least on the Sunday evening, for family worship, to which all his neighbours might have free access : and on those occasions, that he would offer up a prayer himself, or read a part of our excellent church service, together with a chapter from the Bible ; and then read some of the homilies, together with other books of good, ancient divinity, once universally preached in the Church of England, but till of late, almost universally laid aside ; a plenty of which should be immediately transmitted to his hands.

Wor. Did he seem to acquiesce ?

Loveg. Sir, he promised me to exert himself to the utmost of his power, but that he did not know how he could venture to undertake such a solemn charge.

Wor. I hope he will. This will prove a much more profitable way for people to spend their Sunday evenings, than in idle visits, and foolish chat.

Loveg. Why Sir, I believe I have in a measure, pinned him down to the work, by telling him, with his leave, I would make a beginning on the Sunday evening, after the services of the Church ; and that if he knew any of his neighbours who were of a serious turn ; he might invite them as to family prayer : however, if he undertakes the work, it will be with much " fear and trembling."

Wor. The better for that. In all religious engagements, diffidence and success are constant at-

tendants on each other. But must he not take out a licence for his school-room ?

Loveg. I believe not Sir, according to the present disposition of the town ; for it is astonishing the attention and respect which was shown me, after the two sermons I preached on the Sunday. Prejudice, though it seems to me, to be the brainless monster which the sons of bigotry universally adore, is, I trust, through the divine mercy, not so much that idol in Locksbury, as it formerly was.

Wor. Blessed be God, as far as this, it is a glorious triumph. But should Mr. Reader take out a licence for himself, and his school-room, where would be the harm of it ? He only swears allegiance to the state ; and if he cannot swear allegiance to his protectors, it is not fit that he should be protected.

Loveg. Yes, Sir ; but then does he not, by that oath, put himself under the protection of the act for the relief of the Protestant Dissenters ?

Wor. Certainly so. But there is nothing said why he dissents ; that is entirely out of the question. He takes precisely the same oath enforced on the clergy. The law only demands, that every public preacher shall be obedient to the state. You and I, if we lived at Locksbury, should be dissenters from Mr. Fribble's ministry, if not from the Established Church. What can be more disgusting than to have the solemn service of God, conducted by such unmeaning fops ? That mild and wise law, therefore, " asks no questions for conscience sake ;" but gives equal protection to all, who can give proper tests of their obedience to the state : no man is obliged to swear *he is a dissenter* ; but all public teachers, whether Dissenters or otherwise, *swear allegiance* ; and would to God, that all denominations of Christians were as candid to each other, as the laws of the land are liberally framed for the protection of all.

Loveg. Upon these principles every clergyman may take out what is called a Dissenting licence, at any time, if there were occasion.

Wor. If he were compelled to it, unless he hates the government, and wishes to overturn it; and then instead of protection, he deserves a gaol.

Mrs. Wor. [To Mr. Worthy.] Now my dear, you have given your idea as a justice, about licences, do let Mr. Lovegood tell us how it fared with him as a minister, on the Sunday.

Loveg. Madam, I found Mr. Fribble was willing that I should do the whole of the duty for him; so I read prayers and preached.

Wor. I am glad of that: I doubt not but it was a good preparatory business to the sermon: your solemn way of reading those excellent prayers has been very useful before now.

Mrs. Wor. What was your text?

Loveg. Madam, in the morning I preached upon the purity and holiness of the law, from that text, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." You know, that is a favourite subject of mine; from thence I expatiated on the infinite holiness of God, and his law; and in the afternoon I preached on the parable of the Prodigal Son. But it was with some difficulty I was admitted a second time into the pulpit; for the first salutation, after the morning sermon, from Mr. Fribble, was very coarse indeed: "Sir, (said he,) you were too *strict*, you were a deal too *strict* for my congregation. Did I not tell you, that they would not like such *harsh* doctrine? I am sure my Rector, Mr. Careless, will be very angry, if I let you preach again." Immediately a very sensible, sedate gentleman stepping forward whom I afterwards found to be one of the Churchwardens, addressed Mr. Fribble, and said: "Sir, after such an admirable sermon, such an one as we never expect to hear from you, I am persuaded, the people of the town will be very much disappointed, if they do not hear Mr. Lovegood a second time; while many others expressed themselves with equal gratitude and thankfulness, for what they had heard."

Wor. I suppose after this, Mr. Fribble drew in his horns.

Loveg. Directly. His apology was, that he was apt to be warm ; but begged I would be less strict in my doctrine, when I preached in the afternoon.

Wor. Sir, if you preached them such a sermon on the prodigal's return, as you once preached to us, soon after Henry Littleworth's return, it was a very affecting one indeed.

Loveg. Sir, through divine mercy, I felt the subject exceedingly ; the riotous living of the prodigal, was easily exemplified by the riotous consequences of Mr. Madcap's horse-race. However, I hinted but little on that low subject, before I expatiated largely on the infinitely tender love of God our Saviour, towards all returning prodigals. Then I made a distant allusion to the character of Mrs. Chipman : and in the application, considering the circumstances which brought me there, I was much more affected, than I can express. I was so overcome that my voice at times faltered exceedingly, and I could scarcely conclude the sermon, without many tears ; and indeed, the congregation appeared not less affected than myself.

Wor. Sir, you never find our minds so seriously impressed, under a sense of divine truth, as when you feel their impressive influence on yourself. O what ignorance, and hardness of heart, that we are not all more affected at the glad tidings of salvation, by Jesus Christ !

Loveg. I confess, Sir, I never saw people more affected in all my life ! A vouchsafement of the divine presence I trust, was very eminently upon the congregation.

Wor. Why Sir, the Lord has promised " to rain down righteousness upon us," and to give us " showers of blessings !" these are the happy times of refreshment from the presence of the Lord."

Loveg. Yes Sir, and we have a right to expect more under the New Testament, than under the Old. Christ, in his commission to his Apostles, has entailed the same blessings upon us which he promised to

them : " I am with you always, even to the end of the world." And I really think, if ever I felt the divine presence, it was through the mercy of God, when I was preaching at Locksbury Church. Oh Sir, how much we lose by expecting little ! and yet, what may we not expect, from " the exceeding great, and precious promises" of the Gospel ?

Wor. And a man is to be esteemed as a downright enthusiast, if he humbly waits the fulfilment of these promises.

Loveg. It is no great difficulty to put up with the reproach of the world, while we realise those blessings, so frequently promised in the word of God. But there is a wide difference between the enthusiastical reveries of some, and these holy influences from above, which are so wise in their operations, and so gracious in their consequences, as they are exemplified by the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which are produced thereby.

Mrs. Wor. Dear Sir, you know we are delighted to hear this sort of good news. We wish you to be more particular. I suppose the Church was very full ?

Loveg. Oh Madam, the Church was crowded. The curiosity of the people, all around the country, was highly excited ; not only by the return of Mrs. Chipman, but also from the character Mr. Fribble gave of me, that I was a *very great orator*.

Wor. Motives of mere idle curiosity are frequently over-ruled, for an abundance of good.

Loveg. Such was the case here ; for it was amazing with what affection, and kindness the people received the word ; how gratefully they expressed themselves to Mr. Reader, for inviting me, and how earnestly many of them sought my acquaintance. Mr. Reader therefore hinted my design of introducing family-worship in his school-room in the evening of the day. The whisper soon circulated, and the school-room was crowded.

Wor. This was a good sign.

Loveg. Yes Sir, and the effects of it were not less pleasant to my own mind, after that service, which was very serious, and I trust profitable. Many of the people came about me, and pressed me to continue with them another Sunday; mentioning how lamentably they were served, between Mr. Fribble, and his Rector; and that the next parish, contiguous to theirs, was worse off still, as it was served by one Jack Bully, who was a complete blackguard.* I told them how happy I should be to comply with their request, but that my own parochial charge absolutely demanded my attendance; yet if they could procure the pulpit for me, I would take the earliest opportunity to repeat my visit.

Wor. Your visit to Locksbury was attended with much more desirable consequences, than your visit to Grediton. But do not you think, you have already done too much mischief against *the religion*, (as I suppose they call it,) of Mr. Fribble and his Rector, to expect a second admission into the pulpit?

Loveg. Sir, I am told, that Mr. Careless does not mind who preaches, provided his parishioners are pleased, and he is left at liberty to do what he likes best; and as to his poor insignificant curate, he is nobody.

Wor. Hardly fit to be candle snuffer to a card-table. What an evil when such men are intrusted with the care of immortal souls! and what a curse to the people, who have them for their ministers!

Mrs. Wor. Sir, we now do not wonder that you did not come home till Saturday evening, as you were so well engaged at Locksbury.

Loveg. Madam, I found it impossible to leave them

* His character must be omitted from the general list, as it would be too bad for public perusal, only that he was a great advocate for boxing, and bull-baiting; I suppose also for cock-fighting, and cudgel-playing; in order to give people an heroic spirit, and keep them steady to the Church, that they may not be seduced by the enthusiastic spirit of the day.—See some speeches in the House of Commons on this subject as detailed in the public prints.

till the latest moment I could allow for their service. Many, even among the respectable inhabitants, invited me to pass the evening with them, that they might enjoy the same privilege of family prayer, which they had at Mr. Reader's; and as to the poor, I was almost universally accosted by them, requesting me to repeat my visit, and inviting me into their houses; and on this occasion, I found that the bundle of little religious tracts, you gave me for distribution, were very serviceable indeed:—Sir, I humbly trust there is a work of grace begun, in the hearts of many in that town, which has laid a foundation for much future good.

Wor. One would think you had scarcely an opponent left throughout the town.

Loveg. Oh Sir, notwithstanding the general goodwill of the inhabitants, the Gospel, as in all other places, had its opponents. Dr. Rationality, the physician, Mr. Pestle, the apothecary, and Mr. Proveall, the mathematician, went about from house to house, saying, that all this talk about regeneration, and conversion was downright nonsense; and that they could explain all these things from physical causes. And I heard that a Mr. Discussion, a man of considerable reading, and a very leading man in the Town; though it seems he is wonderfully wise in his own conceit, went about, saying, he could not tell whether he was more disgusted at the ignorance of Mr. Fribble, or the enthusiasm of Mr. Lovegood; while several other comrades of Mr. Fribble, especially one Jack Pert, pretended to ridicule what they could not understand. But still I humbly trust, an abundance of good has been done: and the most pleasing circumstance of all, arose from a visit I received from a Mr. Thoughtful, a serious, respectable clergyman, who seems to have been entirely bewildered with the religious notions of the day.

Mrs. Wor. It will be a great mercy if some of the clergy in those parts, should be influenced by divine grace to preach, what all of them should preach, ac-

according to the Bible, and their own subscriptions—the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ; instead of downright heathenish morality, or a sort of undefined jumble, between law and gospel, which nobody can understand.

Loveg. Well Sir, I think Mr. Thoughtful is in a fair way of being all that can be wished, as a minister, in those parts. He heard me twice expound the Scriptures in private houses; and with a great deal of humility, he acknowledges his defective views of the plan of the gospel salvation. His moral conduct, at all times, has been perfectly correct, and he seems to me like a devout Cornelius, and one who wishes to know the truth.

Wor. I should hope his acquaintance with Mr. Reader, will be a benefit to them both.

Loveg. I trust it will; for before I left Locksbury, Mr. Reader, seeing how many people of the town were struck at these things, became quite courageous: though at first he was timid, yet he is now determined to open his school-room, upon the plan I first mentioned.

Wor. I really hope an abundance of good will come upon all this. Oh Sir! you must visit them again as soon as you can: we must put up with Mr. Considerate, or even Mr. Legal-definition, sooner than that you should neglect this call in Providence.

Mrs. Wor. You said, you thought poor Mrs. Chipman began to look a little more cheerful before you left town. These tokens for good were enough to make you all cheerful.

Loveg. Madam, I prevailed with her so far, as to get her into the school-room on the Sunday evening; she sat next to her father, weeping and sobbing all the time; but when she heard how much the people of the town were affected at the sermons which had been preached on the Sunday, she began to take some consolation from what I had frequently hinted; that God permits evil indirectly, for the advance-

ment of his own glory. So all this good was brought about at Locksbury, indirectly, by her unhappy elopement, in submitting to the intrigues of the abominable Sir Charles Dash.

Wor. But, under such uncommon displays of divine mercy, what need there is to guard our minds against the sad temptation of doing evil, that good may be the result.

Loveg. Yes Sir, St. Paul's caution on that subject, is truly wise and good: but all true penitents, are sure to be preserved from such presumptuous sins, while they fear God, and tremble at his holy word. The idea of apostatizing into sin, will be more tremendous to them than hell itself: such as are among the pure in heart, who shall see God, will never more wallow in the filth of sin.

After this, commenced a deal of talk about regeneration, on which point Mr. Lovegood was very accurate, and great, and it might be every edifying if here transcribed for the reader's perusal. But as these Dialogues have already swollen far beyond the original design, nothing further shall be related, than an abridgment of the present subject.

Mr. Reader wrote to Mr. Lovegood about a fortnight after his departure, sending him the most desirable information he himself could possibly have wished to have received, as it respected his visit to Locksbury. This letter threw an abundance of labour into the hands of that attentive and invaluable servant of God. He had first to write Mr. Reader a letter, half as long as a sermon, for his own private instruction; then he conceived it necessary to aid Mr. Reader, in giving him some heads of sermons, upon a better plan than what he formerly adopted: and, besides all this, he had to write a variety of letters to each of his new friends at Locksbury; as from the state of spiritual ignorance in which he

found them, he thought it necessary to give them individually, a copious share of his wise, and pastoral advice.

While thus engaged, he received a letter from his old friend, Mr. Slapdash, informing him of his intention to give him a visit: for though he had never seen him since his removal from Abley, yet, that now, providence seemed to grant him a release, he hoped they might be indulged with an interview with each other, from the following cause: His church was much out of repair, and wanted also a considerable enlargement. He had been reading prayers, and preaching in the Church yard, as long as the season would permit, that on this account he should have about three sabbaths to spare before the public service could recommence. This unexpected event, gave Mr. Lovegood an opportunity to repeat his visit to Locksbury, much sooner than he intended; he having been brought to a determination thereby, to pass the first sabbath with Mr. Slapdash at Brookfield, and then offer his services at Locksbury, for the two last sabbaths, his good old friend meant to continue in those parts. Matters being thus settled, Mr. Lovegood immediately determined upon a considerable abridgement of his epistolary design as a personal interview with his new friends was likely so soon to be renewed. On the arrival of Mr. Slapdash, the reader may expect a further narration of events.

DIALOGUE XXXV.

THE REV. MR. SLAPDASH, MR. MERRYMAN, AND
MR. LOVEGOOD.

THE FOLLY AND EVILS OF SECTARIAN BIGOTRY EXPOSED:
TOGETHER WITH A FURTHER ILLUSTRATION OF
THE CHARACTER OF MR. SLAPDASH.

AT the time appointed, Mr. Slapdash arrived at Brookfield. He first went to the Vicarage; but as Mr. Lovegood's house, and pocket, were too scanty to deal much in the entertainment of others, he was immediately conducted to Mr. Worthy's where he was most affectionately received, according to the standing order of that hospitable house.

Here Mr. Slapdash first met with Mr. and Mrs. Merryman, who were there on a visit, after their marriage. The unmeaning compliments of the people of the world, are never needed among those who "love the Lord Jesus in sincerity:" Mr. Slapdash says, he never had any, and therefore never attempted to fabricate them. The courtesy of the Christian being composed of better materials however, was not wanting. A deal of conversation naturally took place, and as it related to that variety of events, which have already been made known to the reader. These were heard with delight, and rapture by Mr. Slapdash, and attended with such remarks, as might naturally be expected from one of his warm, and animated, yet affectionate, turn of mind.

Mr. Lovegood however, was very desirous to hear

how matters stood at Abley, after he had been dismissed from his curacy ; and one morning, after breakfast, Mr. Worthy being detained at home on some business as a magistrate, the three ministers walked around the pleasure grounds, when the following conversation took place.

Loveg. I am anxious to know how matters are at Abley since I left them. Does Mr. Steepleman continue in the curacy, who was sent to succeed me, when I received my dismissal ?

Slapd. Aye, he has been preaching up the Church, till he has driven almost all the people out of the Church ; and has been preaching against schism, till they are all turned schismatics, at least in his esteem, throughout the neighbourhood.

Mer. What sort of a character is he ?

Slapd. Why, he is half a papist.—In some of his high flying notions, he is quite a papist.

Loveg. Hush ! Hush ! my good brother you always speak so vehemently.

Slapd. There is no taking the devil by the nose, but with a pair of tongs :* and I am sure Mr. Steepleman's doctrines is completely popish, and where can that lead to, but to the devil ?

Loveg. A heavy charge, brother Slapdash !

Slapd. No more than just, be it ever so heavy. Who can bear the thought, that a set of ruined sinners should have their eyes, and hopes turned from God, to seek for salvation in outward Churches, as they are called, and in the tricks of priests ?

Mer. [To Lovegood.] Why, there is a deal of truth in the observation ; thousands, in different ways, are deluded by these means : I shall take sides

* Alluding to a popish legendary story, respecting St. Dunstan ; when the devil accosted him as a tempter, the saint took him by the nose with a pair of tongs.

with Mr. Slapdash. But do Sir, be more particular about Mr. Steepleman's religion.

Slapd. Sir, salvation with him is just the same as with the papists. He has scarcely any thing to urge, but that "you must keep yourself in the church, and trust in her priesthood." As to our good old reformers, while they universally charged the Church of Rome as Antichrist, Mr. Steepleman tells us, she is the true old Christian Church, and the mother of us all; and that though in some things it might have been necessary to reform, yet that in others we have gone too far. The power of the keys, is his favourite topic, and that Jesus Christ has delegated, all the powers of salvation to the priesthood, who can turn in, and turn out, lock in, and lock out, just as they please. He says the Reformers ruined the Church, by giving up confession and absolution.

Mer. It seems, that Mr. Deliberate spent two years of his time in Ireland, before he came into these parts; and he gives an awful account, of the horrid evils of priestcraft in that country. He tells us, that thousands of the poor ignorant papists, can live in open violation of the pure and holy law of God, without the least apparent remorse; but directly as they transgress the laws of their Church, or the directions of their priesthood, they are alarmed at the consequences, as though certain damnation were just about to overtake them; and I fear that Mr. Steepleman's religion, is but one shade better.*

Loveg. How many thousands there are, of all quarrelsome sects, "who make void the law through their traditions;" and how terribly are the consciences of sinners, screened from conviction, and hardened in sin thereby!

Slapd. Now, I said it, and I think I can stand to it, that Mr. Steepleman is quite a papist at least as

* See much of this in Sir. R. Musgrave's account of the late rebellion in Ireland.

far as this goes. First, he supposes, should a man live like a devil, yet, if he be of the true Church, it will prove a great step towards his salvation; but, on the contrary, should a man live like an Angel, and be what he calls a schismatic, through this *damnable* sin, the most tremendous consequences are to be expected; and as to priests, he will have it, that the efficacy of their functions, is in their office, and is not at all affected by their characters; so that a priest, though as wicked as sin can make him, in himself, has a power, by a sort of spiritual conjuration, to send others to heaven, while he himself, if wickedness can take him thither, is going fast for hell.—Is not this popery?

Mer. Indeed Mr. Slapdash, it is popery down right.

Loveg. [smiling.] I thought brother Slapdash would soon make you a convert.

Slapd. Why cannot you remember, when you were curate at Abley, that you preached in my Church, at a meeting of Ministers; and what a sermon you gave us on that text, “Having the form of godliness, but denying the power:” and how you explained to us, that excellent definition of a sacrament we have in the Church catechism, that, in itself it was only “an outward and visible sign, of an inward and spiritual grace;” and was only meant as a pledge, or token of the divine mercies? Don’t you recollect, how you ripped up all the lying hopes of those who trusted in these outward signs, and formal Churches, instead of seeking for the inward and spiritual grace? and the absurdity that some have fallen into, who suppose that the outward ceremony of baptism, creates the inward regeneration of the heart?—I think you were *Slapdash* on on that occasion.

Mer. Well, we must all give up the point. The consequences are really awful, when such wretched substitutes are permitted to occupy the mind, instead of the realities of the gospel. Just so far as a

vain confidence in Churches and priests prevails, the need of that which is inward, and spiritual, will sink in our esteem. "The kingdom of God is *within you*."

Slapd. Yes, and one evil is almost sure to beget another. When you [to Mr. Lovegood,] were curate of Abley, what were the grand objects the poor people were directed to seek after? What you felt, you immediately began to preach, that you and all your congregation were a set of ruined sinners: so that if you had not had Christ to set before them, in his justifying blood, and righteousness, and sanctifying spirit, you had all been in despair together; and this you know was the top and bottom of all your preaching; and you remember in what a loving, uniting spirit, you were then all kept as one, having nothing in view "but the one thing needful." But when Mr. Steepleman came with his *chaff*, no wonder that such as felt any thing like a spiritual appetite, were constrained to seek after something better; and I wish with all my heart, that they could have found what they sought after. But here from one extreme, they were hurried into another; for, while they were driven from the Church by the disgustful trumpery of Mr. Steepleman, they unfortunately hit upon a Mr. Stiff, who it seems, first made an unsuccessful attempt to get into the established Church, though afterwards he put himself under the tuition of a Dr. Buckram, and then turned out one of the most narrow-minded, rigid dissenters, I ever met with in all my life. Having procured a licence, he preaches in the farm house where Mrs. Goodworth lived; and while Mr. Steepleman keeps railing at separatists, and schismatics; Mr. Stiff will be casting out his invectives against the church, and all establishments; and conceitedly insists upon it, that their church government is the only one exactly modelled according to the word of God, and the practice of the primitive Christians; and it is said, that at some of their dis-

senting ordinations, he has been most abominably abusive.

Mer. Oh, the terrible consequences of these controversies about mere empty forms! For after all, who are the people that constitute the real church in the sight of God? Why penitent believers, when convened together, of every party. How dreadful, when any, who are thus saved, and blessed, are found to anathematize, and condemn each other!

Loveg. How much it is to be lamented, that a man of a meek and mild turn of mind, could not have been found to instruct the poor people, when they were under the necessity of seeking for instruction from another quarter. For although it may appear, how well designed the established Church is in itself, for the conveyance of general instruction; yet still, in a variety of instances, through the badness of her patronage, and prevalence of corruption, every candid clergyman must acknowledge the end designed thereby, is by no means accomplished. Were then the work of public instruction confined, merely to any establishment, however good, the evil complained of would be necessarily increased. It is therefore evident, that something is needful to be done, which after all cannot be done by the members of any established church. Therefore what an impediment it is to the advancement of the general good, when people are contending about outward forms, while none of these things are precisely settled in the word of God!

Slapd. Mr. Stiff would have given you a good *trimming*, if he had heard you advance that doctrine.

Loveg. I suppose he would, and almost every exclusive sect, on the most ill-grounded pretensions, has claimed the same; but as for my part, I can find nothing more in the Bible respecting these matters, than that the primitive Christians lived in connected harmony, and friendship with each other;

that elders, or overseers, or bishops,* if you please to call them so, were ordained, or appointed in different cities, to govern the juniors; and sometimes we hear of many of these elders, who presided over one and the same congregation, which happens to be the plain English of the word *church*; and some of these it seems, had the public management, or superintendence of the people, while others of them, were its public teachers.

Mer. Why don't you think that all these elders, or bishops, were teachers?

Loveg. By no means. That passage evidences the reverse: "Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word, and doctrine;" and we hear the word of direction given to the people respecting these; "to know them who labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them: and to esteem them very highly in love, for their work's sake;" or, as we have it elsewhere, "obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account." It is strange, that from such simple rules, different parties should have formed such various conclusions, and then act with such anathematizing severity, towards each other.

Mer. Why, it appears to me impossible, that a precise mode of discipline, could have ever been fixed in the New Testament, circumstances as they then were, being soon afterwards exceedingly altered. We cannot suppose that the ministry of the twelve apostles, or of the seventy disciples, was meant as a standing order for the church, otherwise every preacher must continue a perpetual itinerant. Though the same need of an apostolical spirit, will ever remain, because, from the corrupted state of the human race, the Church is continually apt to decline; and without such revivals, we should be in a wretched state indeed.

* These words in scripture, are evidently of the same import.

Loveg. It is evident from the epistle to the Corinthians, that the mode of worship among the primitive Christians, was very different from that, which in after ages was necessarily adopted. While the extraordinary influences of the Holy Spirit, rested upon the church, full liberty of speaking was allowed to all, even to the women, without any limitation.

Mer. Do you then think that some of the women, were public preachers in those days?

Loveg. They certainly were; for the apostle directs them how to preach, with their heads veiled, or covered, in the public assembly. "Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth, with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head," for that it was "uncomely, that a woman pray unto God uncovered." However, this general permission, for all to speak, was attended with some disorder, even in the purest ages of the church. And indeed it should appear, from the directions given in St. Paul's epistle to Timothy, and Titus, that somewhat more like a standing ministry, would be wanted, when the immediate, and supernatural influences of the divine Spirit, should be withdrawn. We know indeed, that an attempt to revive this mode of public worship, has been made among the people called Quakers, as though the same divine power still existed, supposing that the immediate influences of the blessed Spirit, are still to be expected, in order to qualify their public teachers, for their public work. But alas! they also prove, that while one sect runs into one extreme, another can run into that which is directly the reverse; and thus they naturally prove the weakness of each other's pretensions. It appears therefore to me, that many things must naturally have been left to future circumstances. Still we should follow the general outlines of the word of God, and see that "all things be done decently, and in order.*

* See 1 Cor. xi. *ad fin.*

Slapd. When Mr. Stiff was ordained, it seems there was a great talk among them, that the right to the ministry entirely depended upon the election of the people. As to myself, I cannot recollect in what place of scripture, that sentiment is revealed, as being a part of the discipline of the New Testament church.

Loveg. No more can I. And what is more extraordinary, I never could find out, that any one pastor was ordained as the settled teacher over any particular church;* and yet I most readily admit, that it is a very good *human* regulation, that the people should have their stated ministers, and that proper means should be made use of, to provide a pure, and holy ministry, for the edification of the Christian church, and that the people's choice, so far as they are fit to choose, should be properly consulted. It is astonishing that such disputants, cannot discover upon what a slight foundation, they ground their contentions against each other.

Slapd. O, how Mr. Stiff railed against our church episcopacy, though I believe other dissenters, milder than he, are much ashamed of him for his vehement spirit; and what a dressing Mr. Steepleman gave him in return, on the following Sunday, as one of a set of schismatics, insisting, that it was impos-

* I have heard, that some have supposed this matter, from the allusion made to the Angels of the seven Asiatic churches; but in my humble opinion, prophetic allusions, fall exceedingly short of positive proof. Others have also supposed, that the word *χορηγία* proves the point, from its derivation, to choose by the holding up of the hand; but scarcely any terms at all times abide by their original derivation. We find this word twice in the New Testament. In 2 Cor. viii. 19, we are told of Titus, and another brother, who was *chosen* by the churches in Corinth, to take their alms to the Macedonians. This might have appeared to the point, had it been to *choose a minister*! The other place is in Acts xiv. 23. where Paul, and Barnabas, first travelled through different cities, confirming the churches, and then left them, after *they had ordained or chosen* them elders in every city. It appears here then, the reverse to what might be expected. The Elders were ordained, not by the people, but by the Apostles.

sible there could be a Christian church, without a Bishop at the head of it! How the devil must have been delighted at this!

Loveg. Well, but according to Mr. Stiff's plan of government, he needs not to have been alarmed, at the name of Bishop, for his notions of equality in their Church discipline, render the whole body of them a set of Bishops, or overseers among themselves, as the rule equally belongs to all: such are the clashings between Mr. Steepleman, and Mr. Stiff. No wonder at the terrible confusion created on every side of the question, by such extremes; but with the leave of Mr. Stiff, and Mr. Steepleman, something more moderate, might have been the discipline of the primitive Church. I never could see the great improbability, or impropriety in the idea, that when the Church began to be considerably enlarged, the presbyters, that they might make their government more compact among themselves, should think it necessary to appoint a superintendant over their body; as we have it in civil matters, a Mayor in a corporation, presiding among his brethern, the elders, eldersmen, or aldermen of the City: and what is there in all this, that is either despicable, or absurd? and yet this might have existed, without the least affinity to that strange, worldly government, afterwards adopted in the times of darkness, by the Church of Rome.

Slapd. But what a wonderful piece of work Mr. Stiff made, in ordaining what he called his seven Deacons.

Loveg. Why seven?

Slapd. I suppose that he might closely imitate the conduct of the apostles, who ordained seven Deacons, as we find in the Acts.

Loveg. Deacons! where are they called Deacons? not in that chapter, but in the translator's preface, and that will not stand for inspiration; though the summary they have given to each Chapter, is generally very correct, and good.

Slapd. What must we call them then?

Loveg. Seven *men of good report*, as the Scriptures call them ;—and I suppose, their office was to attend to the proper distribution of the estates, sold in the times of persecution, when it was necessary, that people should have all things common, that they might take that burden off the Apostles' hands, whose office it was, to go about every where, preaching that men should repent.

Slapd. Mr. Stiff has not adopted that into his primitive discipline, though that might turn to his advantage.

Loveg. Nor does he wash his disciples' feet I suppose ; and yet these were scripture precedents, as well as the seven Deacons, as he supposes them to be. If it be necessary that we should follow them in one point of view, I think we should in all ; or else at once admit, that each body of Christians should act for itself, as it judges best, only secluding the wicked from their communion, and still manifest towards each other, all that candour, and moderation, which the cause evidently demands.

Slapd. Nay, but do not we hear of Bishops, and Deacons in the epistle to the Philipians ?

Loveg. Put the word in plain English, and it only means overseers, and servants ; and this accounts for it, why presbyters, or elders, are not mentioned on the same list, because they are the same characters.

Slapd. But is there not a particular account, how a set of people called *deacons* should act ?

Loveg. That is how the *servants* should act, and in all other places in scripture, the same expression is translated servant, or minister ; and this point by a little attention, might easily be proved if we had leisure.*

* I lay before the reader an abridged criticism on this subject, printed on a former occasion.

The word *Διακονος*, though in very frequent use, is only translated *deacon*, in two places in the New Testament ; once in

Slapd. Then we may as well say, those three honest men who are digging in that shrubbery, are some of Mr. Worthy's *deacons*.

1 Tim. iii. where the word is carried through the chapter; and in Paul's dedicatory address to the Philippian church. Now I really conceive, strange as it may appear, that the mistake arose from a Popish original; that communion being over fond of garnishing their church, by a multiplicity of officers, and pretended mystical ideas, adopted, in their vulgate Latin translation, abstruse expressions, only calculated to mislead. Hence the word *Παρακλητος* must be by them translated *Paraclete*, so they have rendered it in English *Paraclete*; in our translation, by the more plain and easy term, the Comforter. So by the same Popish translators, only in the two instances quoted above, we are treated with the barbarous word *deacon*; and our language knows nothing of the character, but as received from them: To illustrate this, how preposterously would it have sounded, had it been translated, Christ was "made a *deacon* of the circumcision!" there translated minister, Rom. xv. 8. And still more so, Is Christ the *deacon* of sin? There also minister, Gal. ii. 17. Thus again Christ speaks of his worshippers, "Where I am, there shall my *deacons* be:" there rendered servants, John xii. 26.—St. Paul speaking of the civil magistrate, says, "He is a *deacon* of God to thee for good," Rom. xv. 4. People little think that the lord-mayor of London is a *deacon*, or rather an *archdeacon*, he being the first magistrate of the metropolis. Phoebe, "a servant of the church," should, to have kept up this translation, been called a *deacon* of the church; and, if one word be better than another, she well deserved it. But it would have been a curious translation indeed, had it been rendered "Who then is Paul, or who is Apollos, but *deacons* by whom ye believed?" properly called ministers, 1 Cor. iii. 5. Similar to this, "Whereof I, Paul, am made a *deacon*:" that is, minister, Col. i. 23; and again, ver. 25. "And so Timothy, the Grecian bishop, is also called a *deacon*." "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things thou shalt be called a good *deacon* of Jesus Christ," better translated minister. See also 1 Thess. iii. 2. So also, had our translators gone through with the coinage, and rendered the verb *Διακονεω* to *deaconise*, they would have been nearly as preposterous: for then it would have ran, "The mother of Peter's wife being healed of her fever, arose and *deaconised* unto them," Matt. viii. 15. So it is said, "Our conversation is always to be to the use of edifying, that it may *deaconise* grace to the hearers," Eph. iv. 9. The women who ministered to our poor Saviour of their substance, that we through his poverty, might be made rich, are said to have *deaconised* unto him, instead of administered. And again, The Son of man came not to be *deaconised* unto, but to *deaconise*, Matt. xx. 18. And as a further proof of the clumsy effects of this awkward, unmeaning new-invented word, even the damned themselves are re-

Mer. Yes, and that poor woman, and her daughter, who are picking up the loose stones from off the lawn, are two more of his *deacons*?

Slapd. What would Mr. Stiff say, if he were present, to hear all this about his *deacons*?

Mer. And what must we say, about our *deacons* also?

Loveg. Why, that Mr. Stiff and ourselves have both mistaken their real office, or character; and however wise it may be, to put men into a probationary state of orders, yet it would have been wiser still, to have given them another name.

Slapd. And what must become of our archdeacons also? Oh how Mr. Stiff used to play it off against that order of our Church clergy!

Loveg. Why, in point of positive institution, Mr. Stiff's Deacons, and our Deacons, and Archdeacons also, seem pretty nearly on a par; only we are not

presented as saying; "Lord, when saw we thee sick, &c. and did not *deaconise* unto thee?" Matt. xxvii. 55. And to finish my criticisms on this subject, Judas was a *deacon*; unless it can be proved that the person who does the office, is not the officer; for thus stands the original word, "He was numbered with us, and obtained a part of this *deaconship*."—*Deaconia* more properly *ministry*. And yet this *deaconal* office was the apostolic office. Acts. i. 15. brings this to a point: "that he," the elected person, Matthias, "may take the ministry, *deaconship*, and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell." Many other criticisms of the same sort, might have been brought forward to prove, that a *deacon* is no new officer, only a servant. Upon the whole, it appears to me, that some good people have been misled by the barbarous word *deacon*, and mistaken the servant for the elder. Dr Owen, while he pleads for the independency of the churches, as it is called, yet strongly urges the necessity of the existence of a little presbytery, for the internal management of those churches. I believe a variety of Christian congregations, would be much more happy among themselves, if instead of being governed "by old men, and maidens, young men, and children, provided they call on the name of the Lord," and are admitted into their communion, they had constituted among themselves, such a sort of spiritual committee, for the management of their church concerns. I insert this criticism, that all parties may be less positive, and more candid and affectionate towards each other, and to see if I cannot bring Mr. Stiff, and Mr. Steepleman, nearer together.

so strenuous to contend for their divine appointment. However, had our good Reformers reduced the size of our Bishoprics, and dispensed with this race of *second-hand* bishops, our Church discipline had been nearer the model of the primitive times. Yet after all, I see very little, if any, impropriety in the office of our Archdeacons, if they did but seriously attend to that office, as coadjutors in the episcopal work, by stirring up the clergy in their different districts, to a more diligent discharge of their sacred works; so that if Mr. Stiff chooses to keep to his Deacons, and we to our Archdeacons, as mere names are of little or no consequence, we should act much more consistent with the spirit, and temper of the gospel.

Mer. Really, it appears to me, as though the Apostles, and their successors in the ministry, after they had received their commission, acted as circumstances seemed to direct them, without laying down any plan of regular operations for themselves, or their successors.

Loveg. So it ever appeared to me. And if this sounds loose in the ears of some bigots, who insist upon it, that their's is the only form prescribed in the word of God, we need not to be under any great apprehension, from the mismanagement of these outward matters: each party takes into consideration the purity, and spirituality of the word of God; and, according to their different modes of government, they direct their Churches agreeably to that excellent rule.

Slapd. I wish both Mr. Steepleman, and Mr. Stiff, were within your reach, that you might give them a good lecture for their bigotry.

Loveg. Though I utterly dislike controversy of this sort, yet as I equally hate the bad consequences of bigotry, I should not care if they were. I would then ask Mr. Steepleman, what would become of his high Church, episcopal religion, were he to pass the Tweed into Scotland, where the established

religion is presbyterian? Then he immediately becomes a dissenter, or, to speak in his own proud language, "he would be living in schism, against the established religion of that country; and would maintain, that there were no Christian Church, because they have no Bishops."

Slapd. And consequently they are all going to hell together, though their hearts may be as full of grace, as his head is full of these strange, high-church imaginations. I think you might also ask, where is the harm, if a Scotsman should continue a presbyterian in England? and where is the harm of an Englishman being an episcopalian in Scotland? Have I a right to knock a man's brains out, because he is a Jew, or a Mahometan? Therefore how much more horrid, when they, who call themselves Protestant Christians, cannot have the least Christian charity, one towards another! I believe there is not a party bigot upon earth, that would not persecute if he could. Blessed be God, for a more enlarged heart, that we may love all that love God, and love to obey him.

Loveg. And upon this principle, my good old friend, I feel it would be my privilege, to hold Christian communion with every protestant Church upon earth. Were I in Germany, it would never be a question with me, Are you Lutherans or Calvinists, but are you Christians? Nor would it distract my brains, or concern me, if their modes, and forms did not altogether suit my judgment, or taste; and were I to attempt the reformation of such matters at the expense of peace, I should do abundantly more harm than good thereby. As in the Church, so it is, in a great measure, in the state. Have I, or has any one else, a right to go from state to state, and try to overturn their different existing governments, because they are not modelled according to that which I so much admire in my own? This would be like an unskilful surgeon, who would hazard a mortification for the sake of cutting off a wart, I wish people

would but act more according to that excellent prayer in our Church liturgy, that we may be "kept in the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life."*

Slapd. Ah, Church liturgy! how Mr. Stiff rails at Church liturgies, while his own prayers, with a very little variation, are as much a form as any of ours, and I am sure, not more scriptural, nor yet more spiritual!

Loveg. I suppose then, we should have but a bad bargain of it, if we were to exchange our form for his. But what are their psalms and hymns, but forms of prayer or praise? I think the least he can do, is to let us alone with our forms, while he is so formal himself. It would have been well if the poor people of Abley could have met with such a man as Mr. Peaceful, instead of Mr. Stiff.

Mer. Was not Mr. Peaceful the Minister who was in the habit of visiting Mrs. Goodworth? I have

* It may not be amiss, to remind every high Churchman of Mr. Steepleman's spirit, of a passage that is to be found in the beginning of the Common Prayer Book, *Concerning the service of the Church*, as it breathes that spirit of true Christian candour, that should never be forgotten.

"And in these our doings, we condemn no other nations, nor prescribe any thing but to our own people only, for we think it convenient, that every country should use such ceremonies, as they shall think best, to the setting forth God's honour, and glory, and to the reducing of the people, to a most perfect, and godly living, without error, or superstition." Had they adopted the practice of such liberal sentiments nearer home, would not the Church of England have shone more, as being possessed of the temper, and spirit of the Church of Christ? and which of her advocates will vindicate that spirit whereby she stands aloof from all other reformed churches throughout the Christian world, without having the least ministerial fellowship, and connexion with them? Even the most able, and excellent ministers of the established church of Scotland, though precisely under the same civil protection with our own, are perfectly secluded from any connexion with our establishment. How often have I heard, even candid dissenting ministers lament the fact, that while the ordination of a Popish priest, is deemed valid, so that after recantation, no further ordination is demanded; yet if a protestant minister of any country, wishes to join her community, reordination is rigidly required!

often heard you mention his name with much approbation.

Loveg. O ! he was a man of a most excellent spirit; and, though from principle he was a dissenter, yet nothing could equal his love to all, who “loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity.” Every thing that was bitter, and railing, he utterly abhorred, while he was the kindest apologist for all, however he might differ from them in things not essential; and while he would make an apology for himself, as it respected our Church liturgy, to which he could not well subscribe, yet he would admire its general tendency, and even would say, with its few defects, that he esteemed it to be one of the national blessings of the land, as a general knowledge of the truths of the gospel, was thereby wonderfully preserved.

Mer. It is much to be lamented, that we should lose the services of so good a man, on account of such scruples of conscience.

Loveg. Not at all. The Dissenters are a very useful body; and in numberless instances, nothing can be done without them.

Mer. I hope you will except Mr. Stiff, and his fraternity.

Loveg. With all my heart. But these good men may work where we cannot, and in many places where their aid is deplorably needed; and why should we wish all the good men to work in one line? —It is amazing what an abundance of good Mr. Peaceful does among all the Dissenters in these parts, his spirit is so tender and good.

Mer. I suppose Mr. Peaceful might have had some other objections against conformity.

Loveg. Yes he had. His principal objection seems to have been, the much lamented want of discipline, as also the too near affinity between the Church and state: but then he would candidly acknowledge, as it was national, it could scarcely be expected to be otherwise; and that national establishments, like all human things, must have their advantages, and disad-

antages ; that consequently, as the state had a right to her choice about religion, so the Dissenters were left at full liberty to choose for themselves ; and that it was no more right for the Dissenters to attack the established Church, than it would be for the established Church to oppress the Dissenters. But nothing delighted Mr. Peaceful's mind so much, as to make his annotations on St. Paul's view about the distinctions of meats, and days, and of meats offered to idols, which exemplifies so much of the forbearing mind of Christ, in the character of that Apostle.*

Mer. Sir, my mind has been much occupied on that subject of late. How much the Apostle urges the meekness, and gentleness, of the Christian character.

Slapd. One wonders that an angry bigot, can live after he has read those chapters, if he has the grace of God in his heart.

Mer. A bigot with the grace of God in his heart ! Two principles, strangely opposite, and these to be the inhabitants of the same bosom ! But let us retire into this pleasant retreat, and talk these matters over more seriously : the weather is delightfully mild, for this advanced season of the year, and I fear this subject is too much overlooked, I am sure it has been so by me. [They sit down, and the conversation recommences.]

Loveg. [With a small Greek Testament in his hand.] Nothing can equal the tenderness of the apostle's mind in the 14th of the Romans. You know

* Nothing is more to be lamented, than the angry spirit, with which these different controversial writers, treat each other, while the high churchman rails at the schismatical, of every party, with the most superstitious contempt, the dissenter in return, will exaggerate the most trifling causes for dissent, against the churchmen, in language equally uncandid, and unfair, I forbear to mention the names of several authors of this angry cast. The writer was exceedingly sorry to find, that on the wrapper, Dr. Gill's reasons for dissent, appeared on seven of the numbers of this publication, without the author's knowledge, and consent, which the publisher immediately withdrew, at the author's request.

that this chapter refers to those Christians, whose minds were not perfectly free from Jewish prejudices; and, though they ill understood the holy liberty of the gospel, and their consciences were consequently misguided; yet still it was in matters, not essential to salvation. These, while thus "weak in faith, were to be received, but not to doubtful disputations," or in other words, to unnecessary wranglings, and discussions. The dispute ran in this chapter, it should seem, upon keeping Jewish seasons, and eating meats according to the Jewish law: this was certainly for want of better knowledge; and yet what a kind apologist St. Paul was for them, in regard to eating meats ceremonially impure! What a spirit of love he inculcates by that observation. "Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him." "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth, or falleth; yea, he shall be upholden, for God is able to establish him." In the same spirit he goes on about days, only observing, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;" and I remember, that was a favourite expression with Mr. Peaceful.

Slapd. I wish it had been a favourite expression with Mr. Stiff, it might have made a better man of him.

Loveg. Aye, and of Mr. Steepleman too; but let us forget them both, and mind the lovely remark of the Apostle on the subject: "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it: "He that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks;" that is, on both sides of the question, they acted according to their light, and consequently were not to be judged of each other.

Mer. And what a lovely conclusion he draws from it. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man

dieth unto himself ! For whether we live, we live unto the Lord : whether we die, we die unto the Lord ; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. What a wonderful change must have been wrought upon the mind of this once stiff, bigotted persecutor, to make him so much the reverse to himself, so gentle, and so mild !

Loveg. But I think this most lovely spirit, is still more richly displayed in what the Apostle further remarks : " Let us not therefore, judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block (or cause of scandal) in his brother's way. I know, and am persuaded, by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean in itself, (though before the coming of the Lord Jesus, many things were prohibited as being unclean ;) but still to him who esteemeth any thing unclean, to him it is unclean." And now mind, what a lovely conclusion he again draws : " But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably or (according to love) destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died."* " Let not then your good be evil spoken of ; for the kingdom of God is not meats and drinks, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Slapd. Stop there brother Lovegood, for a moment, that's the point.—If any *could* go to the devil with such blessed, excellent tempers, I should like to go with such for the sake of good company ; and then let a set of violent bigots, curse, and excommu-

* The reader may find, that Mr. Lovegood, in reading his Greek Testament, made some slight alterations in the text, which, after all, are so insignificant, that they prove how well the public may confide in the present translation. But on that expression, destroy not him for whom Christ died," he first remarked, that the drift of the argument was only to show how the peace of such was destroyed, and not that the purposes of God according to election could not stand if the will, of an angry bigot should strive to prevent it. He further showed that such were at least the attempts of such angry bigots, however unsuccessful those attempts might prove.

nicate each other, as hard, and as fast as they can, on account of a set of non-essential punctilios; provided we can live together on earth, as believing that the same heaven, if we are blessed with the same mind, is to receive us all at the last.

Loveg. You will speak like yourself. But it is next said, that "if in these things they serve Christ; they are acceptable to God, and approved of men." There is no hell for the holy, nor heaven for the unholy: indeed we have heaven in us upon earth, when we are holy. But do let us finish our observations on the chapter, which I conclude to be one of the best *recipes* to cure the bigotry of the human heart. "Let us therefore, pursue the things which lead to peace, and the things whereby one may edify, or build up another; for meat destroy not the work of God." Now in my opinion, this evidently refers to those for whom Christ died, and who are the workmanship of his Spirit. Then we see how the Apostle next observes, that through the liberty of the gospel dispensation, "all things are pure; but that it is evil to a man who eateth with offence," against his own judgment. "Therefore it is good neither to eat flesh, or drink wine," by which a weak brother stumbleth, is offended or made weak. Hast thou faith, have it to thyself before God. Happy is he who condemneth not himself in that which he allows, for he that doubts" about these matters "is condemned" in his own judgment "if he eat," for want of this faith of knowledge; "for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin."

Slapd. I wish the worthy translators of the New Testament, had used a milder word in their translation of that passage. Mrs. Scruple, a good woman in our parish, one of a very conscientious turn of mind, was kept from the sacrament a long time; till I explained matters to her, and gave her to understand, that the passage had no reference whatsoever to the sacrament; and that the passage, which still more alarmed her about eating, and drinking our own

damnation, did not mean eternal damnation, but a temporal judgment, as was evidently then the case of the Corinthian church: "For this cause many are weak, and sickly among you, and many sleep."

Loveg. I fear many good people are sadly puzzled about such passages as these; but then we should take more abundant heed to explain them.*

Mer. It has oftentimes struck me, that much of the same excellent temper, and spirit is likewise manifested by the Apostle, not only as it respects meats and days, but also in things offered to idols: I fear that this subject also, among common people, is but little understood.

Loveg. As we have a little time before us, we will trace that subject also. You know that the heathens in those days, adopted a superstitious trick, in offering the beasts they killed at the shambles, to some of their heathen deities. A portion of the offerings was sold, and another portion of them was eaten in the idols' temples; while some, even of the primitive Christians, of a looser cast, too many of whom were found in the Corinthian Church, were frequently seen sitting in the idols' temples, and eating these offerings with others, as though they were idolaters too. The Apostle, therefore, very justly blames them, for this lax, and wanton conduct: for though they knew that the idol was nothing, and the food neither the better, nor the worse for their superstitious conduct, yet while weaker brethern were offended thereby, that altered the case. What a spirit of love he exemplified, when he said, "If meat make my weak brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world stands!"

Slapd. Oh, how soon would these bitter controversies about trifling non-essentials be at an end, if all were blessed with the same spirit of love! and what a distinction the Apostle makes, between that proud

* This subject is more largely explained in Dialogue the 5th.

“knowledge which puffeth up, and that humble love which edifieth !”

Loveg. Yes, and how kindly he apologises for those, who in judgment, differed from himself ! “Howbeit, there is not in every man this knowledge ? for some with conscience of the idol, unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol, and their conscience being weak is defiled ? but meat commendeth us not to God : for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse.” But then we are to take heed, lest this liberty should become a stumbling block to them that are weak ; for “if we sin against the brethren, and wound their consciences, we sin against Christ.”

Mer. Has not the Apostle some additional remarks of the same nature, in the tenth chapter of the same epistle ?

Loveg. Yes, and most tender, and delightful remarks they are. Oh ! what is Christianity without the loving, and forbearing mind that was in Christ ! But we will turn to them. He first observes, many things may be lawful that are not expedient, because they edify not : how beautifully therefore he directs, “Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth, or good !” And after some further direction, as it respects the weak consciences of others, what an admirable conclusion he draws ! “Whether therefore ye eat, or whether ye drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God ; give no offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to” your brother Christians, called “the Church of God ; even as I please all men in all (lawful) things ; not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”

Slapd. And I think to this we may also add that most beautiful passage, which displays so much of the same blessed temper, “Unto the Jews, became I as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews : to them that are under the law, (ruled by the Jewish law,) as

under the law ;" while he acted the same towards the Gentiles, as being without law, that he might "gain them also." "To the weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some ; and this I do for the gospel's sake."

Mer. Then it should appear, the crime was not in differing in judgment with others ; for it seems they differed even with the Apostle himself, but for showing such a contentious spirit against each other. One would think that this breed of coarse Christians, had never read the thirteenth of the first of Corinthians, concerning that charity or love, "which suffereth long, and is kind, that envieth not, that vaunteth not itself, that is not easily puffed up."—Let me see, I forget what comes next.

Loveg. Why, that love is a modest grace ; it does "not behave itself unseemly : " that it is a disinterested grace ; "it seeketh not its own : " that it is a peaceable grace ; "it is not easily provoked : " that it is an affectionate grace ; "it thinketh no evil." It is also a most happy, and comfortable grace ; for it rejoiceth not in iniquity ; but it rejoiceth in the truth : and lastly, it is a most patient grace ; it "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things."

Mer. While mankind are so corrupted, what need have we for the exercises of these graces inwards to each other ! [To Mr. Lovegood.] Sir, when I first heard you preach, that naturally sent me to the Bible, and I was immediately convinced, that the religion of that book was the religion of love : and I now esteem it a mercy, that I had none of those educational prejudices to contend with.

Slapd. Do not run from the subject, my young friend, as I sometimes do, when I get into the pulpit, till my text brings me back again. What becomes of the religion of Mr. Steepleman, or Mr. Stiff, if this be the religion of the Bible ?

Loveg. Oh, my good old friend, I am more than

ever convinced of this, when I consider other passages which have such a remarkably strong reference to our tempers, and the feelings of our minds, on all these occasions, before God. How much of the mind of Christ appears in that passage to the Ephesians ! “ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness, and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace.”

Mer. And what a heaven even upon earth we should enjoy, if all the people did but prove the reality of their Christianity, by following the same Apostle's advice, in “ laying aside all anger, wrath, and malice ;” and instead of these, “ as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another, forgiving one another : if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave us ;” and then again, “ above all things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.”

Loveg. Oh, this is Christianity indeed ! I once heard of a Deist, who could ridicule the Bible, while he was entirely ignorant of its contents, and design. But when he was referring to the twelfth of the Romans, he was not only struck with the parity, and sublimity of the subject, but at his own wickedness, and folly, for having ridiculed a book, so wonderfully calculated to promote the good of mankind : and how admirably are these blessed tempers inculcated in the same chapter ! “ Let love be without dissimulation ; abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good ; be kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.”

Slapd. Almost the whole chapter runs upon that subject ; but the conclusion is most excellent : “ Re-compense to no man evil for evil. If it be possible, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto

wrath. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink ; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

Mer. We shall have enough to do, if we quote all the passages that relate to this subject : the sum and substance of the Bible, seems to be nothing but love.

Slapd. I am sure all the epistles of John, are entirely on that subject. " Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God ; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God."

Loveg. Aye, born of God ; and by that word, how evidently it appears, we have no solid proof of regeneration, but by its effects, as produced by the grace of love ; for " love is the fulfilling of the law."

Mer. The doctrine of a divine change seems to me, to be the glory of the scriptures.

Loveg. Yes, and a full proof of their divine original. None but a God of Almighty power, could dare to give the promise to change the heart of man, since nothing short of such an almighty power can accomplish a change so glorious.

Mer. I can put my solemn amen to that truth ; I never can be too much humbled for what I was : nor can I ever be too thankful for what, by the grace of God, I trust I now am. Oh, that text ! " What, know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own ? Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and your spirit, which are God's."

Slapd. It strikes me, I will preach upon that subject in your church, when you are gone to Locks-bury.

Loveg. You cannot take a better.

Slapd. But will you try to make me a hymn, suitable to the occasion ? for I am no poet.

Loveg. I will attempt to put a few rhymes together, to the best of my power ; I can go no farther.

Soon after this, Mr. and Mrs. Worthy, and M Merryman, came up, otherwise, their profitable conversation on the new birth, might have continued. They took a further range about the pleasure ground and then returned to the house.

Mr. Lovegood, shortly afterwards, went his second journey to Locksbury, which was no less grateful and satisfactory to him, than the former. But I Rationality, Mr. Discussion, and others, took pains to procure Dr. Stately, and his curate, M Leadhead, to whom Mr. Fribble very readily let the pulpit, to confute the *enthusiastic* notions of M Lovegood. But this they did in such an absurd, a contradictory manner, that they entirely confused themselves thereby. Dr. Stately held him out arms' length, with the most supercilious contempt as being hypocritically strict, and sanctimonious in his religion, while his curate, Mr. Leadhead, could understand him no better, than that he was a preacher of faith without works; both of them charging him also with several other preposterous notions, the most contradictory, and absurd; and the result was that the people's minds were not a little confirmed in those essential truths, which Mr. Lovegood had before delivered among them.

Mr. Lovegood also told about a Mr. Timid, whom he found out in that neighbourhood, who, though he preaches the gospel, yet does it in such a cold, and cautious manner, that nobody is the better for it; that he is ever pleading the necessity of so preaching, as not to give offence; and that he had no notion of exciting people's prejudices, by being too plain. Thus, while by attempting to render "the preaching of the cross" of Christ palatable to the world so as that "the offence of it might cease," neither the world, nor the church would give him credit for his design. Mr. Lovegood however, is of opinion that if he could be got to take some of Mr. Slapdash's elixir, which while it warms the constitution, and is an excellent stomachic, yet never throws into

fever, it might purge him of some of his worldly prudence, and thus make him a useful minister in those parts.

As it is now high time to abridge all these events, nothing more shall be laid before the reader, than Mr. Lovegood's hymn, made for Mr. Slapdash's sermon, as mentioned above.

It seems, the sermon was much in his own style. When he had to display the regenerate heart of man, under the metaphor of the living temple, his imagination became so sprightly, and his language so animated, that it was almost a query with farmer Littleworth, Thomas Newman, and many others, whether he was not nearly as great a minister as Mr. Lovegood himself: however the reader may depend upon it, that Mr. Slapdash became a great favourite at Brookfield, and that his visit was attended with an abundance of good, though it was the opinion of Mr. Spiteful, and Mr. Doolittle, that he was one of the maddest fellows that ever entered a pulpit; while he was followed with the cold pity of Mr. Wisehead, that he was sorry he was not more *rational* in his religion, though he believed him to be a *good-hearted* man, though so extravagantly wild.

Were the whole life, and conversation of Mr. Lovegood to be drawn out, at full length, so holy, and active was he in all manner of conversation, that these little volumes, might soon be swollen into volumes, much too bulky for the public use: on this account, many pleasant, and profitable occurrences must be omitted, while the copy of the hymn, mentioned above, shall conclude the dialogue.

THE HYMN.

"Believers, the Temples of the Holy Ghost."

Cor. vi. 19, 20.

Produc'd at first, by pow'r divine,
Man as a creature stood,

A sacred building in design,
A dwelling-place for God.

With finish'd art the pile was rear'd,
Well fitted for its use;
Just symmetry throughout appear'd,
And glory fill'd the house.

God smil'd in friendly visits there,
And thus his dwelling blest,
While solemn acts of praise, and prayer,
The creature's love exprest.

But sin defac'd its form, and broke
The stately structure down;
His ruin'd temple God forsook,
And left it with a frown.

Polluted thus, and thus abhorr'd,
The house in ruins lay,
Until again by Christ restor'd,
His glory to display.

Laid deep in love this building stands,
Cemented with his blood;
Work'd all with unpolluted hands,
And fitted up for God.

Here his transforming Spirit dwells,
To beautify the place;
With kindly influence sin expels,
And sheds forth life and grace.

Oh, dearest Lord! return, reside,
Within each sinful heart:
Be thou our king, and none beside,
And never more depart.

As temples of the living God,
Thus shall we prove thy grace.
We'll sing aloud redeeming blood,
And chant thine endless praise.

DIALOGUE XXXVI.

MR. CONSIDERATE, MR. TRAFFIC, FARMER LITTLEWORTH,
AND MR. LOVEGOOD.

NO GOOD MARRIAGES, FROM BAD MATCHES.

SOME time after, Mr. Merryman set the example of marriage, in his union with Miss Worthy, which is said to have been so honourable in itself, and was so honourably conducted by them, that other matches were thought of. Henry Littleworth had the happiness to be united to Mr. Considerate's daughter, and Billy Traffic was determined to make himself happy with Miss Nancy Littleworth; and about the same time, Miss Patty Littleworth, was married to Will Frolic, mentioned in dialogue the sixth.

Previous to the final settlement of these marriages, it was thought necessary that the old people should meet together, to arrange the family concerns of each party. As it would, on the one hand, be very wrong in me to divulge these family secrets, so, on the other, it would by no means prove an interesting subject to the reader. Suffice it to say, the meeting took place at Mr. Considerate's; Mr. Lovegood, for the sake of his wise advice, being one of the party; and in the evening of the day, the conversation took the following turn.

Far. Well, Mr. Considerate, I *tells* my son Harry, he is in high luck to have your daughter: the Lord keep him humble!

Consid. A difference of a few pounds, as it re-

spects money matters, is of very little consequence, either one way, or the other, where the best principle for happiness, is solidly established by the blessings of the grace of God upon the heart.

Loveg. All our happiness between each other, independent of the grace of God, rests upon very slippery ground. Even the common social, and relative duties of life, which so plainly recommend themselves to every man's judgment, and conscience, will be ill practised where this divine principle is wanting.

Far. Aye, aye, so we found it in our house, till we found the grace of God in our hearts. And if dear Harry makes as good a husband, as he has been dutiful and loving to me as a son, since he has been blessed with this precious grace, I have no doubt, though he is but a farmer's son, that they will be *main* happy with each other.

Consid. Why Mr. Littleworth, your son has his share of good sense, and you gave him a good education, and God has given him the blessing of his grace, and my daughter is an excellent child; therefore I have no doubt, if God preserve their lives, but that they will be a happy pair.

Far. Ah! my poor daughter Patty, she will never be so happy with that wild young *blade*, Will Frolic, and she is quite bent upon having him!—Poor girl! I cannot help it; if she will please her fancy, I fear she will plague her heart.

Loveg. Why Mr. Littleworth, under these circumstances, things must be permitted to take their course. When children are grown beyond our restraint, opposition oftentimes answers no other end, than to rivet them in their purposes. You can go no farther than to act a parent's part, and commit them to God.

Far. Yes, yes, Sir, I shan't mind giving her a child's portion; I can afford it without injuring the rest of my children, for the Lord has wonderfully blessed me of late; but I am afraid that *spark* is more

send of the money, than of my daughter, though at times, he appears *desperate loving*. He took it as a hard *gripe* upon him, when I would have the money settled upon my daughter, and her children, especially, when I did not think it necessary to bind up Billy Traffic in the same way, in his marriage with my daughter Nancy ? but why should I ? for Billy is a very sober, regular, good young man ; but as for Will Frolick, if I had not bound him up *pretty tight*, he would soon have made *ducks and drakes*, of all the money.

Consid. Your determination had almost been the cause of breaking the match.

Far. Why that was the *upshot* of the design. Harry, dear child, said, that would be the best way to settle matters, though he was once so wicked himself ; but when his old miserly uncle, Mr. Stingey, the tallow-chandler, happened to be overtaken by a generous fit, he offered first to give him fifty pounds out and out, provided I would give as much towards furnishing the house ; and then he said he would give a bond to his nephew of two hundred pounds more to be paid after his death, provided it was all secured to my daughter, and her children, and that brought on the match again ; and though they now appear so loving, I am sadly afraid they will soon live like *cat and dog*.

Loveg. I should not wonder at it ; for there is no real foundation for love, but in the love of God. That foolish fondness, which some people discover towards each other, very frequently degenerates into complete disgust.

Far. It is to *admiration* how I used to remark, what a different way of courting my Harry, and Billy Traffic, had to Will Frolic. Whenever Billy came to my house to see Nancy, he would behave so decent, and orderly, that it was quite a comfort to see them together. And whenever your daughter visited us, we always found she never would come without *Madam Considerate*, or yourself ; and what

nice profitable talk we always had ! But when that wild blade would come to see Patty, he would act as if he was half mad. Neither I nor Harry could keep him in any tolerable order ; and I never could get rid of him, till I called the servants in for family prayer, and then he would be *off like a pistol*.—Poor girl, I am *desperately* afraid that the match will be her ruination.

Consid. I am sorry to hear that he is such a sad, wild fellow ; and I am told also, that he is very insulting in his conversation.

Far. Why, he never could keep his tongue in any sort of order, when at my house ; what an uproar he made one night, when he told my daughter Polly, that she would never be married, because she had lost two of her fore-teeth, and then she was all in a passion.—She is full of envy, that her young sisters Patty, and Nancy should be married before her.

Consid. [smiling.] Perhaps if the loss had been on the tongue, instead of the teeth, it might have been a less calamity.

Far. Ah, poor Polly, even from her cradle, she was a sad *crabbed* child, and I think she is *crosser* than ever, since she has taken to spend so much of her time at Madam Toogood's ; and then she comes home as *brim full* of scandal, as ever she can hold ; but still she is my child.—The Lord make her his child !

Consid. Well, I am glad Mr. Littleworth, my daughter's visits were so acceptable at your house. I can assure you, Mr. Henry's visits were not less so at ours. His conversation at all times, was much to the purpose ; and instead of being driven away on account of prayer, he would often stop and be our family chaplain, and much to the edification of us all.

Far. Aye, aye, dear child, and he prays so humbly, and so much from the heart ; I am sure it does my heart good to hear him. And then, as soon as ever he has done the business of the farm, away he goes after some of his good books : and directly he

has saved a little money, he is sure to go and buy some fresh ones : but he is extravagant in nothing else, dear child !

Loveg. Really, Mr. Littleworth it appears to me, that the grace of God mends the head, while it converts the heart. It brings the mind into such a sober, holy, regular frame, we can know nothing of the good of our own existence, till we exist in God.

Far. Why, now it appears just so to me, as though I had been all my days without brains, while I was living without grace. But blessed be God, what nice winter evenings we now spend at our house ; when Harry sits and reads, and talks to us out of some of his good books. And then he gets Billy Traffic, and some other young people, to come and see him. At times we have quite a little congregation, and then we have such sweet singing and prayers ! But as for my part, I never could sing, but I *does* my best to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord."

Consid. You cannot think me to blame, Mr. Littleworth, while I give my free consent, that my daughter should marry such an excellent young man.

Far. To be sure Sir, I cannot but be very thankful for the merciful providence of God ; that has contrived such a charming match for my child. Little did I think, when he was a wicked wild sailor, that he would ever be married to a gentleman's daughter, who has been twice mayor of Mapleton !—The Lord keep him from pride !

Consid. There is no great honour in being mayor of Mapleton Mr. Littleworth.

Far. Why Mr. Strut, the present mayor don't think so : he fancies he has a right to act as though he was a little god. How he struts about our town, *like a crow in a gutter* ! To my mind, he thinks himself as great a man as King George.—God bless him !

Loveg. I hope Mr. Littleworth, your son has too much good sense and grace to be proud. Pride is nothing better than the offspring of folly, and the disease of fools : and pride turns all things into confu-

sion. When proud people meet together, they never can be happy.

Far. Why Harry, dear child ! makes us all happy ; and Nancy is a sweet, humble, diligent girl. And she is so notable, and attentive to her mother. My dame sees what it is that makes the best child. She begins to think of coming to Brookfield church, oftener than she used to do. I hope to the Lord she feels more in her heart, than she likes to express, for she is ashamed to say much, as she cannot forget how she thwarted us, when we began to think about the salvation of our souls. But the Lord be praised ! she is wonderfully altered.

Loveg. Indeed Sir, I think she is. Nothing can please her better, than the intended marriages of her son, and daughter ; while she is so much concerned at the union designed, between Will Frolic, and Miss Patty. But it seems that several bad matches have taken place in Mapleton, and its neighbourhood of late : I am surprised however, if in this world we are to be surprised at any thing, that good tempered, humble, young woman, Rachael Meek, the linen-draper's daughter, should have consented to marry that strange dogmatic young chap, Jack Positive, the lawyer.

Consid. Ah Sir ! love is blind : I believe the unhappy young woman, heartily repents of it. If ever she presumes to give her advice, she is snapt at directly.—He will say, “Madam, when I need your advice, I will ask it—till then, I shall act as I like best.”

Loveg. What must one of her humble, and tender mind feel, under such contemptuous, and cruel treatment.

Consid. Sir, he will do worse than all this. If the poor innocent creature asks a question, his answer will be, “I shall do as I like best.” If he should venture upon any wrong, or wild pursuits, as obstinacy frequently misguides him, and she begins with ever so much weakness to expostulate, his

answer will be, "I shall not be guided by a woman." Then, lest she should farther provoke him, she very wisely keeps silent, only now and then drops a tear.

Far. Poor dear creature, she must have a *dog's life of it.*

Consid. I dare say a much worse life than your dog leads; for whatever he commands must be observed, be it ever so absurd; and when he has burnt his fingers by his own folly; he will blame her that she did not consult with him; while he appears so little to respect her judgment, as not to allow her to go to market, to provide for the family, but under his orders, and directions.

Loveg. Better to be a beast of burden, than the wife of such a man. If "wives are to be in subjection," yet they are not doomed to be the abject slaves of such abominable tyrants. But it seems that her father was always against the match.

Far. Ah, fathers can't, at all times, get their children to follow their advice: we are a stiff-necked generation; but to my mind, that was another strange match on the contrary side of the question, when my poor taylor, Simon Simple, married Fanny Pert, the milliner; for though he makes the breeches, yet all the *folk* say, she is determined to wear them.

Traf. Why, he has been the taylor for our family for some time; and while he does not want for a share of good sense, yet being of a meek, and harmless disposition, he has unfortunately, given the rod out of his own hands, and then she flogs him well for his folly. Once when my son Billy went to their house about a job, he told a strange story on his return.

Consid. What was it Sir?

Traf. Why, the door being a little a-jar, he heard her cry, "Simon! why Simon! what are you at? why don't you come down directly? young Mr. Traffic is here; I shan't stand bawling after you all

day." And when he gave her to understand that he had overheard her coarse way of talk to her husband, she blushed, and said, "she did not mean to scold him, and that it was only *the tone of her voice* that made him think so, and that they lived very happy together.

Consid. Happy ! how can he be happy, while she is dinning his ears all the day with her impertinent, and noisy talk, and with her insulting reflections ! I believe that all his happiness consists in patiently suffering himself to be *hen-pecked* whensoever she pleases, without saying a word in his own behalf.

Far. There is another match nearly of the same sort, which is quite as bad. You know a Mr. Placid, that married Miss Fury. By all accounts, what a life she leads the poor gentleman ! I am told, there is not a bigger termagant in the town.

Consid. I know the unfortunate man very well. If ever he thwarts her, directly she is the downright tiger. She hears not a word of reason, but falls into a terrible passion, and then cries, out of mad revenge.

Traf. What can he do with such a creature ?

Consid. Why, he puts her in good humour again as soon as he can ; and in order to keep a little peace, he is obliged to submit to all her whims, and projects, and let her have her own way in every thing.—And all that won't do.

Far. Why, to my mind, she must be worse than the devil ; for there is an old proverb, "The devil is good natured when he is pleased."

Consid. But it is a difficult matter to say when she is pleased ; for if her husband dares not contradict her, yet she supposes herself at all times at liberty to contradict him. It has oftentimes grieved me to hear, how rude, and snappish she is to him upon every turn, and yet she won't suffer any one else to scold him but herself. Once, on an occasion of this sort, he said, "My dear, I should not care

if all the world scolded me, provided you did not scold me yourself."

Traf. I'll warrant she gave him a good sharp *curtain lecture* for that speech.

Consid. No doubt of it. But this is not all of poor Mr. Placid's misery. She is such a horrid tormentor of her servants, hunting, and driving them about like a mad woman: if there are any servants he likes, she is sure to dislike them, and to drive them out of the house as fast as she can. She says, if women won't *keep up their authority*, it is their own fault.

Loveg. It is a terrible evil when poor servants are to have their lives made a burthen to themselves, by such tyrannic usage. It is to be lamented, that such masters, and mistresses were not made to serve also under the hard hand of oppression. There is not only a deal of ungodly cruelty, but a considerable degree of cowardly meanness, exemplified by the conduct of these petty tyrants. But while some matches about these parts, have been terribly calamitous, others of them have been as singularly ridiculous.

Traf. I suppose Sir, you allude to that strange match which took place the other day, between Miss Sally Chatterbox, and old Mr. Taciturnity.

Loveg. Oh, that was a strange business!—They say, the sedate old man is so grave, that he will not speak, till he has been spoken to, two or three times, while her tongue is never at rest.

Consid. It seems she is good-tempered, but the greatest chatterer that ever lived; and runs on with such egregious stuff, (for people who talk much, frequently talk nonsense) that she often puts the poor old man to the blush.

Traf. I wonder how the good old gentleman can answer half her questions.

Consid. I am told, she does not ask so many questions, but keeps on with a straight-forward rattle; and the few questions she asks, the old man evades

as well as he can. He hums and haws; and now and then cries, "Yes my dear," and then "No my dear;" and then again, "I can't answer you, you speak so fast." And when his patience is nearly exhausted, he will cry, "My dear, you talk so fast, that it quite makes my head ache."

Loveg. What is supposed to be the difference between their ages?

Consid. Why, *Miss* was about twenty-five, and the old gentleman about sixty-five; and it seems, this young lady, is his third wife. He is a very good sort of an old gentleman, and has a considerable deal of money, while the young lady has little or none, only she had, as it is called, a very polite education at a boarding-school; where I suppose, she was taught to talk at this extraordinary rate.—But did you never hear what a sad mistake took place, when the old gentleman was on a journey, about a fortnight after their marriage, with his new wife, and his son by his first wife, to pay a visit to some distant friends?

Loveg. The story is quite new to me.

Consid. Sir, report says, that when they came to the inn where they were to rest for the evening, the old gentleman and his son retired to sleep, somewhat sooner than the bride, she being engaged to write some letters to her friends, on this *happy event*. When she called for the chambermaid, she unhappily turned her into the chamber of the old gentleman's son. The young man, finding that a young woman was beginning to undress by his bed side, and not immediately recollecting her, cried out against her as an impudent strumpet, and told her to get out of the room, or he would kick her down stairs. Directly she made her escape, called for the chambermaid, told her what a mistake she had made, and asked where the other gentleman was gone to bed: the maid answered, "Why ma'am, there is no other strange gentleman gone to bed in this house, but your grand papa."

Loveg. What blunders are produced by these imprudent matches! But how came Mrs. Liberal to put up with Mr. Scraper, for her second husband?

Traf. By all accounts, there is sad quarrelling between them already. While she will always have her table covered with sufficient provision, that a plenty may be left in the pantry for occasional visitors, he will be hunting after bits, and scraps, supposing that almost any thing will do to mess up for a dinner. And as about food, so he is about raiment. He would appear like an old broken tradesman out of a work-house, with his tattered clothes, and darned stockings, if his wife would let him; and when she only gave away some of his old clothes the other day, that had got into this trim, to a poor old neighbour, this so offended him, that he would not speak to her for near a fortnight.

Loveg. Does not he want her to dress as shabby as himself?

Consid. O Yes Sir, and he is always telling her where the cheapest old remnants are to be bought; and that she leaves off her clothes too soon, when she might scour, and dye them, and then turn them, and thus wear them over, and over again.

Loveg. This must make sad jarrings between them; what strange confusion is created in the world, by the contests which exist between the different corruptions of the human heart!

Consid. Yes, and when people are united, who are under the influence of the same sort of corruptions, the evil will be abundantly worse. What a terrible misfortune it was to Mr. Sharp, and Miss Trimmer, that ever they should make a match of it!

Traf. Ah, that poor girl was ruined from her childhood. Her foolish mother humoured her on every occasion; and though her temper was naturally bad, yet her mother has made it ten thousand

times worse, by puffing up the pride of her heart, in telling her she was a girl of fortune : and yet at first they appeared fond of each other, though such love scarcely deserves the name.

Consid. Whatever love might have been between them, 'tis all hatred now. While he tries to thwart, and contradict her upon every occasion, she flies at him in return, like a fury, calling him fool, puppy, and tells him he would have been a beggar if it had not been for her fortune ; though his business, as a large vinegar merchant, is quite equal to the trifling sum he may have received with her.

Far. But I'll warrant she pays him home again, and gives him *tit for tat*. I remember she came once to our house, to see my daughter Polly, so dressed up in her *furbelows* and *fal-lals*, and I thought her tongue run *desperate glib*. I have a notion she is a *sad saucy puss*.

Consid. However, it seems that her husband can match her in language, and insolence. "Hold your tongue, you insolent jade. Madam, I will be master ;" and sometimes the house is all of an uproar between them. Of late, it seems that she has been very jealous of him, and trims him well on that score.

Loveg. Oh, the terrible consequences of sin ! What a variety of little hells are created in hearts, and in families, and throughout all the world, by its horrid existence ! Lord, what is man ! who can deny the fall ?

Consid. True dear Sir, and I think there is another union in our town, which perfectly proves the same awful truth. It evidently appears to me, that it is almost as necessary to prove, that a man is to die, as that he is a fallen creature.

Loveg. To what other matches do you refer ?

Consid. Oh Sir ! it was that unhappy union between Miss Jemima Meek, and Mr. Lofty, who is a great man in his own esteem, because his great grand-mother, was the daughter of some lord, who

lived in the reign of Charles the Second; and on this account, though he is almost a beggar in his circumstances, he can strut about with such consequence!

Loveg. What silly thoughts can feed that carrion bird of pride, when roosted during the night time of our ignorance, in the unregenerate heart of man! But who is this Mr. Lofty?

Consid. He is the gingerbread baker, that lives in Pride Alley.

Loveg. Oh, that is the shop, I suppose, where Mrs. Considerate is so kind as to buy her fine golden kings, and queens, as presents to my little children.

Consid. Yes Sir, and while he is selling these fine golden things for a farthing a-piece, he is feeding upon the conceit of his ancient noble-blood. Besides, he fancies himself a man of reading; and great knowledge.—He is one of Dr. Dronish's hearers.

Loveg. Well, this beggarly pride is the worst of pride. But how does he treat the poor young woman?

Consid. Why, in language like this. If she asks a question, he answers, "Child, I'll tell you by and by." If she humbly repeats it, "Child, don't be troublesome:" if she ventures to speak in company, "Child, don't expose yourself;" or "How should you know, child?" If she proposes to do any thing, his answer is, "Child, I shall think of it." If he wants her to do any thing, it is, "Child, do this," or "Child, do that;" in short, he scarcely treats her with the respect due to an upper servant.

Far. Old Betty Bustle, who has lived in our house these five-and-twenty years, would run away from us, if I and my dame were to talk to her as *Master Lofty*, the gingerbread baker, talks to that poor creature.—Well, the Lord be praised, that he has a little humbled my proud nature! but to my mind, I had once such *noble blood* in my heart,

while I was living without God in the world, and while I was blustering with my big looks about the market.

But now for an abridgement of the subject. It was much lamented. during the same evening's conversation, that Mr. Lion should have been married to Miss Pigeon, who treated her with an abundance of austerity, though it caused some laughter, when they conversed about the marriage of Mr. Blunt to Miss Prudish ; while the plainness, and simplicity of the one were contrasted with the unmeaning affectation of the other ; though it was a much less laughable concern, when Mr. Smart, who was all vivacity and wit, married Mrs. Dorothy Dull ; and no wonder that soon after their marriage, he treated her with sad neglect.

A counterpart of the same sort of unhappy matches, took place, between Mr. Consequence, and Miss Nobody, who never could find out her stupidity, till after he had married her, and then treated her with cruel contempt.

After this, Mr. Lovegood had to improve the subject. He very wisely remarked, that our infinitely merciful God, has so regulated the government of the human race, as that they should be helpmates to each other, that thereby, a bond of general union might be created for the good of the whole. That the poor, though in servitude, should find guardians and supporters in the rich, who have it in their power, to make even their situation a blessing to them, by their merciful and kind deportment towards them. That parental authority was most mercifully instituted according to the laws of nature, so that the care needed by children, and the respect and honour due to parents, arising therefrom, might create a bond of union between families, through life. And that the foundation of this, originated in the marriage

contract, which civilized nations had universally adopted, and which, when broken, rendered mankind a set of barbarians and brutes.

He next observed, all duties of this sort were reciprocal. Masters are to command with mercy ; while servants are to submit and perform their office with fidelity. Parents are to educate with the tenderest affection ; children are to obey with the purest simplicity and love. So as it respects the marriage union.—Minds differ. It was certainly determined that the wife should submit and obey : she was “the first in transgression ;” but then the husband’s duty is not the less to “love, cherish, and respect her,” as “the weaker vessel.” And while the divine mind has determined that she should be in subjection, yet such husbands as are blessed with the mind of Christ, will remember that they are directed to “love their wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water, by the word. For that no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it, and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.”

This excellent moralist, next asked the question, on evangelical principles : Will such Christians, act as tyrannic lords over their wives, because it is said “the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man ;” that “the man is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man ?

I once knew a pretended boaster of religion, who was ever quoting against his poor wife, that “the husband was the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church,” and that “as the church is subject unto Christ, so wives are to be subject to their own husbands in all things :” and oh, how he used to bore the poor woman on these words, “in all things !” But let all these jarring-strings, be reduced into holy harmony and order, and let the wife learn, as the scripture has directed her, “to reverence

her husband ;" and let her distinguished ornament be that "of a meek, and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God, is of great price ;" and each of them will find in that happy union, their paradise regained.

Mr. Lovegood, at the same time, gave it as his opinion, that nothing is more beneficial to the good of society, than that young persons, blessed with the fear of God, should thus unite themselves to each other on an early day. That it was the duty of parents, not wantonly to thwart, though to regulate, the inclinations of their children, and that also in the mildest manner, as circumstances might require. But that, from the instances which had been before them in conversation, a similarity of disposition above all things, should be first sought for, yet not with rigid exactness. A good man may be over-generous : can he do better for himself than to seek for a partner, who is frugal and attentive, without being covetous and mean ? Should another be hasty and rapid, what can he do better than to unite himself to one who is dispassionate and calm ? And if the young woman has an unhappy tendency to that, which may be frivolous and indiscreet, who knows but that she may be much corrected, should she meet with a man who may be cautious and reserved ? In short, that it is not so much the dispositions themselves as their evil tendency, through the corruption of mankind, against which we should be put upon our guard ; as it was evidently not the disposition itself, but that disposition, being under a corrupted influence, which was the cause of every calamity, that had been the subject of their present conversation.

Mr. Lovegood also mentioned, that a little equality, as it respected money matters, might not be an improper consideration, as this too often creates the most unpleasant reflections, and disputes. And last of all, as being ultimately of the least consequence respecting age, he observed, though many inconveniences from that quarter, arise from such inconside-

rate unions, yet that it was beyond a doubt, a variety of old, and young fools, at least somewhat like it, good-natured creatures, have lived very happy with each other.

Mr. Lovegood, lastly urged some very impressive ideas respecting the sad perturbation of mind, created among all those of every rank, whose tempers were completely contrary to the holy mind of Christ. That even heaven itself would bear a semblance of hell, could such minds surround the holy throne above: perfect holiness, and infinite happiness, are inseparably united.

Thus Mr. Lovegood went on well in moralising. So also my young readers would determine, had I time further to transcribe his wise, and good advice; and for their sakes, thus much is presented before them on this most important subject. There is something very engaging in the undisguised simplicity of unpolluted youth. Oh, that my dear young friends had the advice of a Lovegood always sounding in their ears; and the like grace, which is the delightful theme of his preaching, constantly dwelling in their hearts! Such will not only be graciously protected from the evils of life, but as mercifully directed into every path that is wise, and good. And under such regulations, how happy shall I be without fee or reward, so far as I can gain the permission of the Dolittles of the day, (while a denial from the Lovegoods is scarcely to be apprehended,) to tie the bond of union that makes the parties so happy in each other.

DIALOGUE XXXVII.

ANTINOMIANISM UNMASKED.

BETWEEN MR. LOVEGOOD, MR. MERRYMAN, MR. SAVORY, HIS
COUSIN JOHN, AND MR. MALAPERT.

MR. Lovegood receives the following letter from
Mr. Merryman.

MY DEAR SIR,

As you allow me to consult you without reserve, and under every difficulty ; I must inform you of some recent events, which have filled me with the most serious apprehensions ; lest the peace and prosperity which has hitherto so happily prevailed, should be interrupted by the *vain janglings* of some, who are attempting to make their inroads among us.

I am quite surprised, that no body of *respectable dissenters*, have found their way into the Town, while most of the inhabitants are in gross ignorance, excepting some Baptists, and a very few Quakers, of whom it seems there are but three families in the town. These collect together every Sunday morning, in a large room, contiguous to the house of one of them ; but as they seldom have any public speaking among them, very little is known concerning them ; though I fear, they are but ill acquainted with the doctrine of the atonement, and reconciliation with God, through the sacrifice of Christ ; yet I find them very kind, and innocent neighbours, and am happy to treat them in return, with all the civility and

attention in my power. On our evening lecture, some of them frequently steal into the Church, and affectionately acknowledge that they receive good from what they hear.

I wish I could speak as favourably of the Baptists; for I fear the one depend too much on their sanctification, for their justification; not a few of the others seem to deny the need of personal sanctification altogether; though I am happy to find some favourable exceptions to the general remark.

You know the character of their old minister. He has been *ringing changes*, these forty years, upon *eternal justification*, and what he calls *imputed sanctification*, and the perseverance of the saints; which seems little better, than a sort of inconsistent perseverance in laziness; and security; after they have persuaded themselves to rest in a self-conceited confidence, that they are right, without any evidence of the fact: while the practical, and preceptive parts of the scriptures are treated by them with strange neglect.

It seems this old man has lately heard of some new *seceders* from the Church, with whom he is highly delighted, because they have adopted his sentiment about baptism, and have been rebaptised by immersion. One of these he has, unhappily for me, introduced into his pulpit, and curiosity has invited many to hear what this *new light* has to advance; and alas! I am sorry to say, that there are some, who are fascinated with something, they know not what; while many artful innuendos are introduced, that they now hear the gospel fully, which they never heard before; intermixed at the same time, with such horrid insinuations, which are in my opinion, most intolerably profane; that "the greatest sins we can commit, can never alter our state, as it respects the covenant of grace;" and that "God can never be angry with his elect, even when they commit the worst of crimes." Are we then to suppose that we are in the covenant of grace, without the

grace of the covenant? and how can people in such a gracious state, be guilty of the worst of crimes? and can they imagine that the holy God, can so alter his nature, as to see sin, and not hate it if he finds it, even in an Angel? Surely if he pardons the criminal, he hates the crime; and can such pardoned sinners dare to "continue in sin, that grace may abound?" must not every real Christian hate the thought? I trust the first moment I was convinced of sin, I began to dread the commission of it, worse than hell itself; what then can be the use of such strange, unwarrantable expressions, but to make loose minded people, looser still, and to cause the enemies of God to blaspheme the doctrine of our free forgiveness, through Jesus Christ?

Notwithstanding their doctrine is so disgusting, as well as dangerous, the bewitchery has actually succeeded upon the minds of some; one positive old woman, whose tempers at all times are the most inconsistent, and unsubdued; goes prating about the town, "crying in the wretched cant of the party:" that she has found out, why she could never get any *comfort to her soul*, under my preaching, because I insisted upon it, that "God's elect should be made more holy than he himself ever designed they should be," "and that as God has *strengthened* her faith, she shall never fear about her sins, and corruptions as she has done, that she is now *sure she believes*, and therefore she is safe, and nobody shall shake her confidence any more all her days;" while her husband says of her, that she is such an arrant termagant, that she ought to be ducked every day of her life for scolding. I am happy however to find, that two or three, of the most judicious and correct of the Baptists, begin to recoil at what they have lately heard; and are aware of the danger that arises from preaching the mere *skeleton* truths of the gospel, without their practical effects, and consequences on the heart; so that if a few of my congregation see

to be fascinated by these vain disputants, others have left them and have forgotten the prejudices of their education, and mean to attend the Church till they can hear sounder truths at the meeting, where they have been accustomed to worship. And although I have cause to thank God that there is not much to be dreaded from these* *schismatical* efforts, yet still the plague is in a measure begun. And as you well know how to controvert those different *heresies* that have been brought forward against the plain, simple truths of the gospel, I most fervently intreat you to come over and help us, and give us some sermons on these most important topics.

No one can be more respected, and revered among the people of this Town than yourself. Mr. Savory, and some others that have lately left the Baptist congregation, are quite as anxious to see you as myself. I am sure your fervent zeal against such most dangerous errors, will not allow you to put a negative on this my earnest request.

Your most affectionate son in the Gospel,
H. MERRYMAN.

Mr. Lovegood's answer to this letter, was replete with all that good sense; containing at the same time such wise, and pious remarks, as might naturally have been expected from him, and though I am satisfied the good taste, and piety of my readers would be greatly gratified, were they to be presented with the whole of its contents: yet those parts which more immediately relate to the present point, shall alone be transcribed.

Mr. Lovegood observed, that whatever appearance of *novelty* might seem to attach itself to these *new lights*, it was nothing more than a revival of the same bad spirit, which in a measure prevailed in the earliest ages of the primitive Church. That the

*See note at the end of the Dialogue.

apostle Paul foresaw the evil, and forewarned the elders of Ephesus of ~~it~~, in this strong language. "For I know that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock," and that these their *outward* enemies, would not be their worst enemies; for that "also *among their own selves*, should certain men arise, speaking perverse things, to *draw away disciples after them*." That this is awfully and notoriously the case with the present set. That they regard not into what Christian societies they enter; nor yet lament, or even make it a matter of consideration, how far they may break the peace, and harmony that subsist among them, by the introduction of their unjust insinuations, and dogmatic assertions, if thereby, they may, out of other Churches, make a little party for themselves; while like Ishmael of old, their hands are against every man, while every man's hand in self-defence, must be against them in return.

He further observed what St. Jude mentioned, concerning some of the same spirit, that though some may go further in these abominable ways than others, yet the core of the evil is still the same in all; and among all parties, who "*separate themselves, not having the Spirit*," and that it is peculiarly applicable to the present set; since as far as he could learn, all of them were of one mind, respecting the operations of the Spirit; and that whatever some such as these might have to say, respecting the correctness of their own outward conduct and moral deportment, yet the slightest inattention to what St. Judge further said, "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Ghost; and keeping yourselves in the love of God;" would prove a most criminal neglect: and that any disregard to such practical passages as these, especially where *progressive sanctification*, or a *growth in grace*, like the carrying on of a building &c. were to be met with, could not but prove of the most dangerous consequences to the souls of men.

He next observed, that such spirits, while they cannot "please God, because they are contrary to all men," have in general, in them, such a share of positivity, and self-conceit, that it were hardly possible to do them any good; and that therefore the Apostle's advice was the wisest, to "mark such as caused divisions, and offences, contrary to the doctrine they had received, and to avoid them;" not withstanding such may attempt, even with "good words, and fair speeches, to deceive the hearts of the simple."

He further illustrated, how strongly the Apostle noticed the danger of such a spirit, from the advice he gave to Timothy, where after having given the same directions to him, as are to be found in all his other epistles; to attend to social and relative duties, he thus remarks, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *the doctrine which is according to godliness*, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doating about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness;"* and no wonder that he should further say, "from such withdraw thyself."

After a few observations further on this head, he next exhorted his beloved son in the gospel; by no means to fear a full, and explicit avowal of those most glorious truths whereby the free justification and acceptance of the ruined sinner, are at once secured, through the imputed righteousness, and finished salvation of our Redeemer, without any previous terms, conditions, qualifications, or prerequisites to be performed by us; and espe-

* Though the latter charge is by no means equally true against all, yet many of that stamp, in modern times, may be mentioned, and was most remarkably exemplified in a certain coal-heaver, who during his life time, could ride about the country in a coach and four, with two out riders to attend him.

cially as from these principles, he might best maintain the creed of our personal sanctification, which must be effectually accomplished in all those who believe, whereby alone the omnipotent agency of that divine Spirit, is restored to us, so as to make us "dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ!" He lastly gave a promise, that within a fortnight, he should come over to Sandover, in order to assist in correcting that profane disputatious spirit, which some of corrupted minds, were striving to introduce.

Immediately as Mr. Merryman knew the grace of God in truth, he established a week-day evening lecture. Mr. Lovegood naturally chose to be with him at that time, that he might avail himself of that opportunity, to deliver his sentiments on this important subject. Men that have itching ears, though they cannot endure sound doctrine, yet cannot altogether keep away from hearing it. For it seems that most of the little party were then present, when Mr. Lovegood preached an admirable sermon on this text, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Christ Jesus." Phil. i. 6. Most forcibly did he shew, that all the good work which is to be accomplished *in us*, is in consequence of that great work of redemption, which Christ has already accomplished *for us*, that we do not *entitle ourselves* to justification, or add to it, by what we are, or what we do; but that we are entitled to sanctification, through what Christ is for us; and that the plain, and evident meaning of the text is, that the sanctification of the elect, is a *progressive work*, and that it manifested the true unadulterated meaning, of the perseverance of the saints, by such saints being enabled to persevere in the ways of holiness unto the end, for that "he that persevereth to the end, shall be saved" not for the *sake* of this perseverance, but because they do persevere, as an *evidence* that their hearts are right with God. That he should be

ashamed to suppose, such a self-evident proposition could need what is called *proof*, yet as some had gone so far, as to deny a *growth in sanctification*, or rather to deny the need of it altogether; he asked; how it could be possible to deny the need of a growth, when we were according to John, to grow from being little children, to be young men; and afterwards, fathers in God? or further as Peter expresses himself, “as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby,” or when the *growth* of a christian, is compared to the growth of vegetation, like corn, first in the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear, and again, that we should *grow* as the lily, and the vine, and as calves in the stall; and if some might attempt to evade the force of such expressions, supposing that they may refer to the growth of the Kingdom of Christ at large, like the growth of the grain of mustard seed, the absurdity of this is refuted, by asking the question; how is it possible for a forest to grow, if each tree of the forest does not also grow; while all this is further evidenced when every individual believer, is directed to grow in every individual grace. That our Lord once reproved his disciples on this subject, “O ye of little faith, wherefore did ye doubt?” and if they had not felt the justice of the reproof, they had not prayed, “Lord increase our faith.” So, likewise, the Apostle mentions the faith of the Thesalonians, which at first might have been similar to that of others, yet now says he, “your faith *groweth* exceedingly.” Just so also, respecting the grace of love, the same Apostle prays; “the Lord make you to *increase* in love,” and further, “and this I pray, that your *love* may *abound* yet *more and more*,” and for this purpose, “that ye may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the praise and glory of God.” Then again respecting hope, “that ye may *abound in hope*, through the power of the Holy Ghost,” Nor are these things mentioned re-

specting these three leading graces of faith, hope, and love, as belonging to the Christian character only ; but that the whole assemblage of them, should be divinely enlarged, for that " God is able to make *all grace abound in us,*" that " these things may be in us, and *abound :*" that as there were some who brought forth thirty fold, there were others that brought forth sixty, and others a hundred fold, and that the same was to be understood, when our Lord said, herein is my father glorified, that ye bear *much fruit*. That the same idea of abounding, increasing and growing in sanctification, and personal holiness, was evidently held forth, when we are directed to "*grow in grace,* and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ ;" yea, that we should *grow up into him in all things*. And that as the Church at large, "*groweth into a holy temple in the Lord,*" so also all spiritual believers, " as lively stones, are *built up* a spiritual house, an holy priesthood ;" and such was the happy state of those, when "*grace abounded,*" and when "*great grace was upon them*" all. And that it was very horrid to damp the expectations of the children of God, in their hopes of that good, which was so copiously promised to the elect of God, before whom alone, " the path of the just was placed," which was " to shine *more and more,* unto the perfect day."

Here Mr. Lovegood became, contrary to his usual suavity, exceedingly warm, acknowledging that while every page in the sacred volume, refuted the *detestable heresy*, he had dwelt too long in exposing a daring attack, upon a self-evident proposition, blasphemously contradicting that most solemn command, " be ye holy, for I am holy."

After this excellent sermon, young Mr. Malapert who was just articulated to a Lawyer, and was once a great admirer of Mr. Merryman, but lately perverted by these new seceders, went out of the Church in a terrible rage ; and immediately wrote to Mr. Merryman, blaming him that he should allow such a

doctrine, as *progressive sanctification*, to be preached in his pulpit : and that he was ready to vindicate the doctrine of *imputed sanctification*, before all its opponents, against such *legal mixtures* as Mr. Lovegood had advanced. Mr. Merryman well knew, that though Mr. Malapert was a good hand at prating, and at prating only ; yet he did not refuse the challenge, lest it should be misconstrued into a sort of victory ; and though he might very safely have entered into the contest single handed, with such a vain, self conceited antagonist ; he was not sorry that Mr. Lovegood was at hand, to speak for himself.

The young man accordingly came the next morning, where at the same time, he happened to meet a very good old man, Mr. Savory and his cousin Mr. John, who had been driven from the Baptist congregation, by the dangerous, and crude doctrines, that had lately been more especially retailed among them.—The Dialogue thus commenced.

Malapert. Well gentlemen, I hope you are all well. You must think me a bold young fellow, to attack two such great divines at one stroke. But little David was not afraid, even of a great Goliath, because he knew that he had God on his side. I have been living on *milk for babes* long enough, and I begin to want some *strong meat* ; and now the Lord has sent it to us. I have lately had a new light into some passages of scripture, which I never understood before. [To Mr. Lovegood.] And when you sir, understand the gospel better, you will not give us such long harrangues on the need of *personal sanctification*, or a *growth in grace*, as we had from you last night, but all this, must be expected, from such as deny *imputed sanctification* ; and you know what the Apostle says on that subject, that “ Christ is made unto us sanctification.”

Loveg. If we poor babes, may speak for ourselves, some things may be made ours by imputation, other things can alone be made ours by impartation. It shall be most fully admitted, that our criminality was made over to him who "suffered the just for the unjust;" and that the whole of his obedience, and sufferings unto death, are made over to us, for our justification unto life, but can I impute my wisdom, to make another wise; as I can impute my money to pay another's debts; is it possible to make knaves honest, by imputed honesty; drunkards sober, by imputed sobriety; and whoremongers chaste, by imputed chastity? I am quite at a loss what you can mean, but as you further explain yourself.

Mer. Do you think then that Mr. Lovegood meant last night, that when we are directed to grow like vegetation, or children, that it is to be an imputed growth, or when we are commanded to increase in every Christian grace, and to abound more, and more in all these good things; that your sort of imputation will accomplish it, while the impartation is withheld?

Mal. I must confess that Mr. Lovegood puzzled me for a while; but I soon recovered myself, after I had entered a little more deeply into the doctrine of *eternal justification*.

Loveg. I thought I should find you thereabouts, Pray Sir, were you born from all eternity?

Mal. Why Sir, "known unto God, are all his works, from the foundation of the world."

Loveg. I am willing to go with you further still upon that point; the infinite foreknowledge of God, existed before all worlds were made; it is from eternity, to eternity. But what of that Sir?

Mal. Why Sir, upon that it is, I ground the doctrine of eternal justification; that the elect were actually justified from all eternity.

Loveg. Surely Sir, you only mean, that it was the design of God from all eternity, that they should be justified.

Mal. O no Sir! that they actually were justified.

Mer. Am I then to understand, that when you called me in the other day, to witness the signing your indentures, that you were articulated to an attorney, from all eternity.

Loveg. Again Sir, have you been committing a deal of sin from all eternity?

Mal. How could I do that before I was born?

Loveg. So I think Sir. God does nothing, if he pardons nothing, when he has nothing to pardon. Pray can the king pardon a criminal, *before* he is a criminal? or did he reign from all eternity? because there was a time fixed in the purpose of God, when he should reign.

Savory. Aye, and I heard quite as much as this, at our meeting before I left it. I cannot tell what possessed our old man to ask the foolish question, whether "an elect soul would be damned, if he should die before it was given him to believe?"

Loveg. What, then are we to suppose that God can violate his own designs, to suffer any such to die in unbelief, and thus to save them contrary to his own solemn declaration, "he that believeth not shall be damned." I should rather have concluded that such were immortal, until their conversion, and salvation from sin took place. But how did he settle this knotty point?

Sav. Why, he began in his accustomed style, and said, "Let me speak freely to you. The Lord hath no more to lay to the charge of an elect person, yet in the height of iniquity, and excess of riot, and committing all the abominations that can be committed; I say *even then*, when an elect person, runs such a course, the Lord hath no more to lay to that person's charge, than God hath to lay to the charge of a believer; nay, God hath no more to lay to the charge of such a person, than he hath to lay to the charge of a saint triumphant in glory."

Mer. What are these your sentiments now Mr.

Malapert, after having attended upon my ministry, above these four years ?

Mal. To be sure they are, if I believe in *eternal justification* ; “ for being the elect of God, they are the heirs of God ; and as they are heirs, so the first being of them, puts them into the right of inheritance ; and there is no time, but such a person is a child of God.”

Mer. Even all the time he is manifesting himself to be a child of the Devil. What then can the Apostle mean concerning himself, and the converted Ephesians, who were “ predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ ?” was he mistaken in this point, when he says, they were “ all by nature, children of wrath, even as others ;” that “ we were enemies to God by wicked works ;” and that while in that state, they were “ not his people, and not beloved ?”

Loveg. Yes, and how contrary all this is, to the express declaration of the word of God. “ He that believeth not is condemned already ;” yea, that “ the wrath of God abideth on him ;” while the same Apostle pronounces a solemn anathema against all, “ who love not the Lord Jesus,” one would think that such people meant to fly in the face of that most direct declaration, “ Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God : be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revellers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God ;” and you don’t suppose, that your old preacher would register these among the non-elect, when it is further added, “ and such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of the Lord :” does it not therefore evidently appear, that such people, while they were in such a bad state, could not have entered the kingdom of God, till after they had been pu^t

into a good one; is it possible, for the Lord to say any thing to the wicked, but "Depart ye cursed?"

Mal. But God foresaw that they would be put into a good one.

Loveg. Who doubts of that? but what has that to do with the horrid supposition, that men may live and die in all sorts of sin, and still be saved?

Mal. But Sir, if you properly understood the doctrine of imputation, as we do, you would still find yourself in the wrong: though your arguments may be a little more specious than I can at present contradict.

Loveg. We are very willing to hear you further on your doctrine of imputation.

Mal. A great Doctor in our way, observes, "Must not a man be reckoned to be a sinner while he does sin? I answer No, though he doth sin, yet he is not to be reckoned a sinner; but his sins are reckoned to be taken away from him;" and again, "If thou hast a part in the Lord Christ, (as all the unbelieving elect have even while acting like so many devils,) all these transgressions of thine, are become *actually* the transgressions of Christ, and so cease to be thine; and thou ceasest to be a transgressor; from that time, they were laid upon Christ, to the last hour of thy life; so that now thou art not an idolater, a thief, or any thing else that is bad, thou thou art not a sinful person, whatever sin thou committest."

Mer. This is *strong meat* with a vengeance. Whoever can swallow this, may swallow any thing.

Sav. I suppose you had all this from the young man that preached at our meeting, since I left it.

Mal. Yes, and an excellent *Christ-exalting* sermon it was.

Sav. You went to hear it cousin John, when I refused to go with you, because I did not choose to set a bad example.

John. He said nearly the same things: I suppose they were all taken out of the same author. "It is

the iniquity itself, not our punishment, but our sin, that the Lord hath laid upon Christ; I mean it is the fault of the transgression itself. (It almost made my hair stand on end, when he went on saying,) "To speak more plainly: hast thou been an idolater? hast thou been a blasphemer? hast thou been a murderer, an adulterer, a thief, a liar, or a drunkard? if thou hast part in the Lord, all these transgressions of thine, became *actually* the transgressions of Christ. Nor are we so completely sinful, but Christ being made sin, was as completely sinful as we." And after he had said a few things, that we should not encourage ourselves in such sort of crimes on that account, he added, "The loathsomeness, abominableness, and hatefulness of rebellion, were also charged on Christ, as well as the guilt: yea, that God made Christ as verily a sinner, as the creature himself was.

Loveg. [To Malapert.] Sir, do you call all this exalting Christ? Could you say worse of the Devil himself? than to suppose he is *actually* guilty, and an *actual* partaker of the most horrid and foul crimes, that human nature can commit! By this way of talking, you make it out, that he positively deserved the punishment he met with. But if he was actually the blasphemer, the murderer, and the every thing that is bad; how could he be the substitute, or the surety for the sins of others?

Mer. Yes, and then what becomes of these passages which tell us, he was "the Lamb without blemish?" and how could he "offer himself *without spot*, to God?" or how could he be "*holy, harmless*, and separate from sinners?" if all the sins of his people, were made his own, as though actually committed by him? how could he "suffer the just for the unjust" when he himself was unjust? 'how could he "bear the sins of many," when he had all his own sins to bear? or how could he in any wise suffer for others, when he had to suffer for crimes, the worst of crimes, which were *actually* made his?

what can be plainer, than that “for the transgressions of his people, was he smitten;” and that all our sins, not his *own* sins, were laid upon him, by a transfer of our guilt on his innocent person, “who *knew no sin*,” who was neither guilty, nor filthy, but at all times, most innocent and pure.

Loveg. Yes, and from the same profane supposition, some of them have advanced that, which appears to me, still more profane; that at that time, God “hated, and abhorred Christ, as the greatest sinner upon earth;” to say nothing of the absurdity of the unchangeable God, thus loving at one time and hating at another, the same adored person; yet how could such a hatred ever have existed, when God himself declares, “this is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well pleased*;” and that he was the holy one, “in whom his soul delighted.” If he could thus be made the subject of his father’s wrath, how could he in the hour of his extremest sufferings, still address him as his Father? “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;” and even while on the cross, he claimed the Lord as his God; “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and in his last expiring moments, he could confidentially say, “Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit:” really it appears to me, that such whimsical interpretations of scripture, were not worthy of a refutation, were they not exceedingly profane.

John. Yes, and at the conclusion of the same young man’s sermon, I remember he said, that “a toad could not be more odious in the sight of God, than Christ then was,” for that all the hatefulness, and loathsomeness in our nature, being put upon Christ; he stands as it were, the abhorred of the Father.”

Mer. And are these the profane and horrid discussions, that have lately occupied your mind?

Mal. Sir, I sha’n’t give up the point yet, though I confess I am not so ready at an answer as I thought I should have been, but how could I expect it, while I have so many upon me at the same time? [He feels

in his pocket ;] I find I have left my pocket book behind me, in which I have a great number of short hand notes on this subject. I'll assure you I have studied the point very closely, and I hope to be a preacher soon. There is very little Gospel preaching about these parts. With your leave Mr. Merryman, I'll step home for my pocket book. I shall return again in a few minutes, and I'll warrant, I shall be able to stand my ground.

At once he was off, like a pea out of a pop-gun. Mr. Lovegood had his doubts, what good end could be answered, by continuing the controversy with such an antagonist ; But Mr. Merryman feared, that an impertinent triumph might be the result, if a further hearing should not take place. They all thought it most prudent, to wait for his return, the result of which will be found in the following dialogue.

* Note to page 116.

Mr. Merryman is perfectly correct in his application of the words heresy and schism, *Aspeis* from *Aspein*, or from *Aspeu* to take up, to remove or take away ; describes a sort of spiritual sheep-stealers : so schism from *Σχισμα* a rent, a division, or separation. The evil is not in any persons following their own judgment, in what they think preferable ; but among those who possess an angry, contentious spirit, so contrary to that spirit of candour and forbearance, that Christians should manifest towards each other.

DIALOGUE XXXVIII.

ANTINOMIANISM UNMASKED.

BETWEEN MR. LOVEGOOD, MR. MERRYMAN, MR. SAVORY, MR.
JOHN HIS COUSIN, AND MR. MALAPERT.

IMMEDIATELY on Mr. Malapert's return, the dialogue thus recommenced.

Malapert. Well gentlemen, I have not been long gone. I hope I shan't tire your patience in resuming my subject, as I am a pretty good *dab* at short-hand writing. I think I have brought sufficient materials, so that I may be able to stand my ground better than I have done; (he takes out his notes.) And now gentlemen, you shall hear what I have further to advance on the doctrine of imputation,* or rather, an actual exchange of persons, between Christ and his elect.

Loveg. Sir, I hope you dont mean to detain us long about these doctrines, in which we all most assuredly believe and agree. Do you think we deny the mediatorial righteousness of Christ, *habitual*, (and as far as that, we will admit imputed sanctification,) *active*, and *passive*, to be a righteousness sufficient to, and designed for, the salvation of the elect. Or whether our justification, and all other blessings, when we are made partakers of them, are the fruits of

* Most of these quotations are from Dr. Crisp, (in high estimation among the party.) These sermons were republished by the late Dr. Gill, who has thereby done infinite mischief to some of the less pious of his own denomination, while a deal of pains is taken, to explain away some of the most dangerous points, contained in those sermons; yet it is impossible so to neutralise them, as to render them palatable, or safe. The reader will discover this as the dialogue proceeds.

this righteousness, and the only meritorious cause of them. Or whether Christ's obedience and sufferings were so in our stead, that God cannot exact from us, any other atonement for sin, or meriting price.

Mer. And I will add, whether Christ by his righteousness, procured a finished salvation for all his chosen people, so that they assuredly shall in his own time and way, be saved by his grace, and made meet for his glory ; and all that, upon the credit of that very righteousness, which is imputed to true believers, by which all the blessings of the covenant of grace, are secured to the children of God.

Mal. Upon my word gentlemen, you in some respects come nearer to the gospel than I expected, but as yet, you fall short of the real point. I believe, (taking out his notes,) there is actually an exchange of persons, between Christ and the believer, "Mark it well, Christ is not so completely righteous, but we are as righteous as he ; nor are we so completely sinful, but Christ became, being made sin, as completely sinful as we, nay more ; we are the same righteousness, for we are made the righteousness, of God." "That very sinfulness that we were, Christ is made that very sinfulness before God ; so that Christ takes our persons, and conditions, and stands in our stead : we take Christ's person and condition, and stand in his stead ; so that if we reckon well, we must always reckon Christ to be in our persons, and our person in his."

Loveg. And this Sir, I suppose, you will say is your way of exalting Christ, by most profanely putting the Saviour in the sinner's stead. Supposing a prince, with all his honours, puts himself in a beggar's state, with all his rags and sores ; would not the prince be most grievously debased, and the beggar exalted ; or supposing a Judge should put himself in a criminal's state, why then the criminal is innocent, and the Judge is guilty, and ought to be hanged in the criminal's stead ; for that the Judge, *actually* committed the crime, and not the criminal.

we may suffer penalties, and pay debts for others, but we cannot, actually commit crimes, for others. And further, this doctrine actually dispossesses Christ of all his offices, and turns the creature, into the Creator : for if Christ becomes the sinner, he actually loses his office, and is no longer the Redeemer, but the sinner that needs to be redeemed, instead of being a most exalted saviour, he becomes a most debased, wretched, Hell deserving sinner ; instead of being exalted, to give repentance, and remission of sins, he needs himself pardon, and forgiveness, as much as the vilest sinner upon earth. Is it not enough that he should impute his glorious righteousness, without taking our *filth* and guilt, on his holy person, who never could know sin ? was it not enough that he should bear the punishment of our sins, without being actually himself a sinner, and thus rendering him, *worthy* of all the punishment he sustained ?

Mer. Or perhaps by this change of person, the sinner becomes his own saviour, pardons his own sins, and merits eternal glory for himself.

Mal. Well, I shan't adopt this sentiment, till I have thought of it over again. I confess I am not as yet quite settled, since I began to have a *clearer view of the Gospel*.

Loveg. I hope you don't mean to turn preacher, till you have settled what you are to preach. I am told the other young preachers, that have adopted these sentiments, have had two or three turns, since their first turn ; it will be well, if some of them don't turn Atheists before they have finished all their turnings.

Mal. I hope we shan't go too far, but you know what a deal we have of *do, do, do*, from every pulpit, now-a-days.

Loveg. Very proper, while we duly attend to the evangelical principles of our Bibles, it is our duty to insist upon their practical effects, and consequences upon the heart.

Mal. O yes Sir ! but what does it avail, to tell dead

men to work for life ; “for as for striving, we are sure to be saved, whether we strive or no, if we are elected, what signifies doing any thing, we do but labour in vain. If a man will run a hundred miles for money, if that money be proffered to him at his door, before he steps out of his house ; his journey is in vain, seeing he might have had it, if he had staid at home.”

Loveg. What then becomes of a thousand practical directions, as we have them throughout the scriptures ? are we not commanded to “run, that we may obtain ;” to strive, or rather to agonise, that we may “enter into the strait gate ;” to “fight the good fight of faith ;” to “give diligence to make our calling and election sure ;” so “work out our own salvation, with fear and trembling.”

Mal. Yes ; but is it not next directly said ; “for it is God that worketh in us, to will, and to do, of his own good pleasure ?” what does our attempting to work signify, till it is his good pleasure that we should work ?

Mer. Why, I should have thought, that it was given to us, as a word of encouragement, that we might work ; and when he works in us, to will and to do ; willing and *doing also*, must be the certain result.

Mal. I know not how these new lights, as you call them, get over such passages, but I once heard one say, that “these legal strivings, have been the cause of the damnation of thousands ;” and a certain great divine in our way thus expresses himself ; “*Let subduing of sin alone for peace.*—While you labour to get by duties, you *provoke God as much as in you lies.*” Now this is a strong expression I confess ; but it is all against a *legal* spirit.

Loveg. What then, is a man to be damned for seeking his own good, in the salvation of his soul, though I know his *primary* object is, and must be the glory of God.

Mal. Primary object ! I say it should be no object

at all, "that all our prayings, fastings, watchings, repentings, believings to obtain peace of conscience, or heaven, are abominable, and answer no other end, than to deceive our own souls, and to rob Christ of his glory.

Loveg. Now I say just the reverse ; for in seeking God's glory, we should remember that God in infinite mercy, has made it our duty to seek for the same blessedness in ourselves : for does he not design that "*men shall be blessed in him*?" else what mean a thousand passages like these? "He looked for the recompence of reward." "Let us therefore labour to enter into his rest, lest any of us should seem to fall short;" when the talents were given with the command, "occupy till I come," was it not with a design that they might be benefitted by it? and when the labourers were sent into the vineyard, to labour for a penny a day, was it not, that they should receive their wages? Don't be frightened Sir, I did not mean a reward of merit, or of debt: for after the best of all our doings, we are still *unprofitable servants*; all is but our bounden duty; it is therefore entirely the reward of grace and mercy from him, and not less a debt of gratitude from us towards that most gracious master, that favours us, in accepting such feeble services at our hands.

Mal. After all that you have said ; in my opinion such sentiments lead us under the law.

Loveg. Then under the law may we be led ; while the bible further tells us, that "*in, though not for, keeping his commands, there is great reward*?" and that therefore we should "*hunger and thirst after righteousness, that we may be filled*." Are we not to repent for this end, *that our sins may be blotted out*;" to believe in the Lord Jesus, *that we may be saved*? What could Paul mean, when he wrote to Timothy, and said, "in so doing thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee?" and what could the same apostle mean, when he said, "I keep my body under subjection, lest by any means, when I

have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away?" can any words be more explicit, than the words that tell us, "when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive?" while the contrary curse is pronounced against the wicked, if they die in their sins; like as it is said, "to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the day of provocation;" and what can be more cogent, than the exhortation of the same apostle, "see that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth; much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven? for how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Mer. And what can be plainer than the Apostle's exhortation: "wherefore be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as you know, *your labour is not in vain in the Lord?*" But what does any other quotations signify; motives from the threatnings, and promises of God, are endless? and can it be sinful to attend to them, for the promotion of our own good, when they are given to us for that very purpose?

Mal. Well, I still believe it, though we may by our legal workings, and strivings of all sorts, expect to get a deal; yet "I'll speak plainly, there are none of all these things, that conduce a jot towards obtaining any of these ends which you propose to yourselves; for when we labour, by prayer, and seeking the Lord, to prevail with God, to take away his displeasure, and to procure such good; we serve not God, but ourselves."

Loveg. So then a man does not serve God, all the time he does serve him: if according to scripture he expects the good, and benefit of it to his own soul thereby; while he thus attends to his duty, as God has commanded, and the means of grace that he hath appointed. Are we forbidden to love ourselves,

while we are commanded to love God, and to keep his commandments ?

Mal. Why you know what is said against that principle ; “ Men shall be lovers of their own selves.”

Loveg. You will soon knock up your own character as a lawyer, if you cannot distinguish between that spirit of selfishness, which makes us care for no one’s interest but our own. Christians *delight themselves* in the Lord, while it is “ Christ *within them*, that is the hope of glory ;” and thus it is promised in return, that “ a good man shall be satisfied from himself.”

Mal. Satisfied from himself ! how can that be ?

Loveg. Had you been better acquainted with the sober and wise language of the book of Proverbs, I would charitably hope you would have been more cautious in your objections. I plainly perceive, how constantly you shuffle from all the practical and perceptive parts of the word of God, lest they should be brought against the preconceived opinions you have lately formed. I fear this proves, that there is a sad core of dangerous Antinomianism at the bottom of your heart.

Mal. Sir, I am not against loving God, or our neighbours, if we can do it disinterestedly.

Loveg. You appear to me to be quite bewildered in what you are at. Because we ought entirely to aim at God’s glory, *above all things* ; therefore we must not aim at all, at our own happiness in the enjoyment of this God, while it is God’s grand aim to do us good ; therefore it should not be our aim at all to do ourselves good, because we ought to obey God out of gratitude and love ; therefore we should not obey him, if we hoped for any blessing for ourselves, as the result. Because God hath engaged to give life, and happiness to the elect, when they have finished their warfare upon earth ; therefore they must not design their own happiness in any thing they do, or scarcely venture one step towards it, lest they should be *legal*.

Mal. Sir, I am just entering upon the study of logic, and I dare say, I shall then be able to refute all you have advanced.

Mr. John. [To Mr. Merryman.] Sir, I'll tell you what entirely drove me out of our meeting. I declare I had rather hear common cursing and swearing, than such sort of doctrine, that "if I am holy, I am never the better accepted of God. If I am unholy, I am never the worse. This I am sure of, that he that elected me, *must save me.*"

Sav. Ah, Cousin John, you and I were both too much bigotted to the walls of our old meeting, but I am sure it was our duty to leave the place, since the truth has left it.

Mal. Left the truth? why there was never so much truth preached in that meeting-house till of late, since it has been built. I never knew how to come by assurance of faith, till I heard it set forth in that meeting, about a fortnight ago. I have now done with all my former doubts and fears, since I have left off hearing you, Mr. Merryman; no wonder that my soul was kept in bondage, while I was directed to look after a hundred marks and evidences, that I might examine myself by them.

Loveg. If this is your way of talking young man; though you have ceased to doubt for yourself, I hope you will give us leave to doubt for you. If you are afraid to know the state of your own mind, it is a sad evidence against you.

Mal. Well, well, I have now no fears left upon that score; here I have it in my short notes, what is to be the ground of my assurance for the time to come; [he reads.] "Would you know that the Lord hath laid your iniquities upon Christ, you must know it thus. First, is there a *voice behind thee, or within thee*, saying, *particularly to thee, Thy sins are forgiven thee?*"

Loveg. Stop Sir. I did not know that enthusiasm, and Antinomianism were so near akin, for that the

knowledge of our pardon is to rest upon fancied, personal revelation to each individual.

Mal. Sir, I had not finished my quotation, you will find it is the word we go by. "Dost thou see this voice agree with the word of grace? that is, Dost thou see it is held out to the *most vile, and wretched creatures, as thou canst be?* and upon this revelation of the mind of the Lord by his spirit, according to the word, doth the Lord give thee to receive that testimony of the spirit, to sit down with it, as satisfied, that upon this, thou makest full reckoning, thou hast propriety in this particular to thyself? If thou dost receive the testimony according to that word, here is thy evidence thou hast thy propriety, and portion in this." Now Sir, what say you to this?

Loveg. With your leave Sir, I would ask you this question. If, and while, I continue one of the most vile, and wretched creatures I can be, I can but persuade myself I am perfectly pardoned, without any warrant or evidence besides; am I to believe it, and then boldly to say, that the Holy Spirit enabled me to believe the abominable antinomian lie, without any of those sanctifying evidences, that faith must produce upon the heart?

Mal. Yes, I know that legal preachers demand of us heaps of evidences; some of these will tell us, "that love to the brethren, universal obedience, sincerity, singleness of heart, and all other inherent qualifications, are signs, by which we should judge of our state, *but I say they are not.*"

Loveg. Then we are not to mind what John says; "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

Mal. I have no doubt, but that I shall be capable to give an answer to that text soon, when I am able better to understand it; but I have marked down some other fine, bold strokes, which I have lately heard from some, who know how to preach the Gospel, without clogging it with evidences. I have them here in my notes. "Sanctification is so

far from evidencing a good state, that it darkens it rather, and a man may more clearly see Christ, when he seeth *no sanctification*; than when he doth. The darker *my sanctification* is, the brighter is *my justification*; for a man cannot evidence his justification, by his sanctification; but he must needs build upon his sanctification, and trust in it."

Loveg. How so? Ask the most devoted Christian upon earth, whether he makes that as his *confidence*; which he humbly receives as an *evidence*, that his heart is right with God, and that his confidence in Christ alone is correct.

Mal. Why "God won't suffer his people to be over righteous, lest they should trust in it." I heard a preacher say, "it was a *soul damning error*, to make sanctification an evidence of justification;" and that "the *more we sinned*, the more we might believe in the simple testimony of his word, who justifieth the ungodly, without any *intermixture of faith, and repentance*; or *any thing else from us*."

Loveg. It is really most dreadful, to hear you thus run on, denying the solemn work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, as an evidence of the reality of our faith.

Mal. No Sir, I only say, "the seal of the Spirit is limited, only to the immediate witness of the spirit; nor doth it ever witness to any work of grace upon the heart."

Loveg. Why then, if the Holy Spirit does not witness to his own grace upon the heart, are we to suppose he witnesses to nothing?

Mal. Why the truth is, "I know I am Christ's; not because I do crucify the lusts of the flesh; but because *I believe in Christ that crucified my lusts for me*."

Loveg. Do you mean this, in direct opposition to that passage, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world?" But I have rather a curiosity to ask you, if you have

any thing further in your notes about this curious witnessing of the spirit, to wind up the business.

Mal. "Is there any thing in the world of better credit, than the Spirit? *we must not therefore try it by any thing else, or question it*, for this is the word of grace, according to which he speaks. Reconciling the world unto himself, *even the world*, when men are no otherwise, but merely men of the world."

Loveg. Now Sir, I think you have put your finishing stroke to what you call the witness of the Spirit; even an unregenerate person may have the witness of the Spirit; though in himself, earthly, sensual, devilish, a child of the devil, of the blackest sort, thus the pure and Holy Spirit of God, and of truth itself, is most profanely supposed to witness, to the most abominable lie, and to buoy up those, who are of their father the devil, in the way to hell.

Mer. And that, contrary to the most express testimonies of scripture that can possibly be recorded. "If ye love me, ye will *keep my commandments*; we know that we know him, *because we keep his commandments*;" "Know ye not, that ye are *reprobates* cut off from God, if Christ be not *in you*?" and that it is "Christ *in us*, that is the hope of glory?" that the Spirit *beareth witness with our spirits*, that we are the children of God?" can the same spirit, bear the same witness to the children of the devil? Are we not told of the fruits of the Spirit, and what sort of fruits these are? and does not the Saviour say, "by their fruits ye shall know them?" Is not every description of the good man's character, of the same sort?

Loveg. [Interrupts.] My dear friend, if you go on with all the evidences the Bible holds forth, this conversation will last this fortnight, while ridicule itself, might justly be called in to expose an error, so preposterous, and so false. The spirit of truth is to make me believe, that I am, what I am not; and then after believing, I become that which I am not.

Thus the humble vicar of Lower Brookfield may be-

lieve, he is Archbishop of Canterbury, while he cannot produce a single evidence of the fact, that so it is but from his own imagination. And you Mr. Malapert, may as well suppose, that having just set off in the law line, that you are *by faith*, become the Lord Chief Justice of the court of king's bench; or my Lord Chancellor if you please.

Mer. And the long confined debtor, may believe that all his debts are discharged, though he has no evidence from his surety, that he has the most distant design of paying, even a single sixpence of them. Mr. Savory, supposing you were to go up to London, and there get into a little trade, and then fancy without sense, or reason, that you are Lord Mayor of London, would that really make you so?

Sav. If I have not been twisting my thumbs, one over another, till I am quite in amazement. But I see where these abominable doctrines lead to, more than ever. I am grieved at heart that they should come over *our Jordan*, to join our denomination. It some how, seems not to our credit, that when they became determined to separate themselves, as far as they could, from all others, they should come over to us; I wish they had continued where they were, for they have made dreadful havock and divisions among us; though I can assure you that neither of you ministers, can dislike their ways, and doctrines worse, than many of ours do.

John. [to his cousin.] I think cousin, we have been too stiff in refusing to hold communion with any but our own party, I find there are other Christians as good as ourselves, still you and I have got some good out of the evil; for you know, what sad heavy work it was, for us to go to our meeting, sabbath, after sabbath: and of late, without having the most distant hope, or expectation of the least benefit in any thing we heard, while one person would be yawning in one pew, or another would be half asleep in another; and another fast asleep in a third: it was

shocking work to be starved as we were, for want of some spiritual food, that was likely to do us good.

Sav. I am sure, that at last I was quite starved out of the place, though I had somewhat to do, to leave it; especially as from the prejudice of education, my mind ran pretty strong against the Church.

John. And so did mine cousin, we both of us were ready to cry, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" but blessed be God, after we had been starved out from our old meeting, we soon found our mistake.

Sav. I repented a number of times, that I did not leave it before; but when he preached upon that text, "without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" that quite did for me.

Mer. Why what could he make of that text.—It was quite plain enough.

Sav. It was so to me, till our old minister made a puzzle of it. He has been called old parson puzzle-text, for some years in our town: but whenever they of that sort, get hold of any text that insists upon practical godliness; they are sure to be floundering about, to get rid of the meaning of it if they possibly can. If I know any thing of myself, I love such blessed passages to the bottom of my heart.

Loveg. And so does every soul that is sanctified in Christ; but what did he make of the text?

Sav. Why *without Christ*, no man shall see God.

Loveg. Very true; but had he the ignorance to assert, that such was the meaning of *that* passage.

Sav. Yes Sir, and he thought he proved it, by observing what was said just before; "*follow peace with all men*;" that says he, must mean Christ, for "he is our peace," and therefore to follow holiness, means the same thing.

Loveg. How is it possible to suppose, that such people can believe their own nonsense? I should be inclined to laugh at their folly, if I was not grieved at their bad design.

Mer. Yes, it appears to me, that the design is as

bad as it can be. That word *following*, don't agree with their creed ; it sounds too much like increasing, and getting nearer to a certain desired point ; and as for *following peace*, divisions and disputings, seem to be the first chapter in their creed ; and as for holiness, what have they to do with that, while *imputed sanctification*, makes up for every thing. Their perversion of such passages as these, must have the most dangerous tendency upon the minds of such lax and wanton professors, who have no heart to walk in those ways of holiness, though " God has fore-ordained, that we should walk in them.

Mal. Whatever you may say against the meaning of that text, a great minister in the west of England in our way, is of the same sentiments ; and as for what you say Mr. Merryman ; the great Doctor that I principally admire, has these words ; " It is a conceived conceit among some persons, that our obedience is the way to heaven ; and though it be not *as they say*, the *cause* of our reign, yet it is *the way* to the kingdom. I tell you all, that this sanctification of life, *is not a jot the way* of the justified person into heaven : " the truth is, since redemption is managed by Christ, the Lord hath appointed other ends and purposes of our obedience, than salvation. "*Salvation is not the end of any good work we do.*"

Sav. Why then if I repent, and believe the gospel in order that I may " receive the *end* of my faith, even the salvation of my soul ; " I am doing wrong all the while I am doing *right*, according to the express command of God. If this is to be the doctrine that is to be preached at our meeting, you may go into the pew, that cousin John and I occupied, we shall never go there any more to turn you out.

Mal. I confess that some of these *strong meat* expressions, were more than I could at first digest myself ; yet now I can swallow even what my beloved Doctor further said : " you will say then, we had as good sit still. He that works all day, and gets nothing better than he had in the morning, ha !

as good sit still, and do nothing.—Let me tell you the prevention of evil, IF THERE BE ANY EVIL IN IT, or the obtaining of good, IF THERE BE REALITY OF GOOD ; peace of conscience ; joy in the Holy Ghost ; pardon of sin ; the infallibility of miscarriage ; the light of God's countenance ; all these I say, are abundantly provided for you, and established firmly on you, by the mere grace of God in Christ, before ever you perform any thing whatsoever."

Loveg. O then by this I find I am to believe I have it, before I have it ; and I must not seek that I may find, because it is thus abundantly provided for me ; and lest I should seek my own good, as well as the glory of God in those blessings of grace, which are so richly provided for me.—Why all this is abundantly below common sense ; it is uncommon nonsense, while your Doctor forbids me to seek, that I may find, because it is *unnecessary*, God's command is, "seek that you *may* find." And because the kind donor means to do me good in the things he freely gives, I must not seek my own good in the enjoyment of it, though he designs it.

Mer. But what shocked me most, was, that while all of us know better than to suppose, that our obedience is the *cause* of our reign ; yet that it was not even *one jot the way* to the kingdom. So that it seems the way of holiness is entirely cut up by their sort of gospel. I hear also of the ways of the wicked, will it be admitted by these antinomians, that cursing, swearing, and all sorts of debauchery, is the right way to heaven ? or is there no way at all there ? but am I not told of the *way* of truth ; the *way* of righteousness ; the right *way* ; a more exalted *way* ; and the *way* of salvation ; as well as the salvation itself : are we not told of the narrow *way*, that leads to life ; on which the just progressively are found to walk ? to whom God hath given one heart, and one *way* ? are we not decidedly told, that the *way* of the just is uprightness ; and does not David talk of run-

ning in the *way* of God's commandments, while we are told of a *high way*, which is called the *way of holiness*, on which the unclean are not to pass—where am I? What am I hearing? most mercifully has God given me a thousand directions how to walk, as a travelling stranger and pilgrim upon the earth! and am I not to be directed by them? are they to mean nothing? am I so wise in my own conceit, as to need no directions to set me right, when I am wrong, or to keep me right when I am so?

Mal. O Sir, that is a long established rule among all of us, that the law is no rule of life to a believer; for “we are dead to the law by the body of Christ.”

Loveg. But Sir, go on with the quotation if you please, if not, I must do it for you. Why are we said to be dead to the law, through the body of Christ, “that we should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead; *that we should bring forth fruit unto God*; and that we should serve in *newness of spirit*, and not in the oldness of the letter?” In short, that the spirit of obedience, which we have lost by the covenant of works, should be restored to us by the covenant of grace; so that not only all needed grace should be communicated to the heart, but that whenever God sees sin in us, it may be conquered and subdued, from day to day.

Mal. How can God see sin in his elect? The great Doctor I so much admire, thus settles that point, by the following *noble strain of argumentation*, among those, who are bold enough to believe they are the elect, without evidence; yea, and in spite of evidence to the contrary. “Though such persons do act in rebellion, yet the loathsomeness, the abominableness, and hatefulness of rebellion, is laid on the back of Christ; he bears *the sin*, as well as the blame, and shame; and that is the only reason why God can dwell with those, who do act the thing; and if it be asked, how should God know every sin the believer doth commit, and yet not remember them? the answer is, though God remembers the things thou hast

done, yet he doth not remember them as thine ; for he remembers perfectly, they are none of thine : when he passed them over to Christ, they ceased to be thine any longer : so that the Lord hath not one sin to charge upon an elect person, from the first moment of conception, to the last moment of life ; no, nor original sin is not to be laid upon him, the Lord hath laid it on Christ already ; yea, every elect vessel of God, from the first instant of his being, is as pure in the eyes of God, from the charge of sin, as he shall be in glory : and it is the voice of a *lying spirit* in your hearts, that saith, that you who are believers, have yet *sin, wasting your consciences*, and lying as a burden, too heavy for you to bear."

Loveg. How awfully near all this daring *rant* is, to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, whose sacred work it is, to convince of sin, and so to reprove us for it, that we may know and feel, that it is an evil, and bitter thing, to sin against the Lord ! Was it a lying spirit in the heart of Magdalene, that made her weep much, because she had sinned much ? was it a lying spirit in Peter, that made him go out and *weep bitterly* ? was it a lying spirit in John the Baptist, that said, " Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ?" was it a lying spirit in our Lord Jesus Christ himself, when he said, " Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish ?" and did the Holy Ghost himself, create a lying spirit in the hearts of three thousand believing sinners, when at the same time, they cried under the grace of repentance unto life, " What must we do to be saved ?" Really the common blasphemy that is to be heard in the world, is as nothing when compared to the deliberate blasphemy which Antinomianism suggests.

Mer. One would suppose, that this profane, and daring set, never read what it cost David, all the days of his life, after his most grievous fall, in which he so highly displeased the Lord ; that the sword never afterwards departed from his house ; how he beclouded all his own evidences, and how he went on

with his broken bones, to the very verge of the grave; till just at last, a beam of divine light, was restored to his mind, whereby he was enabled to say; "thou hast made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure."

Mal. But the great divine I have before mentioned, thinks otherwise: for he thus asks the question; "Was not David a justified person? and did not he bear his own sins? "My sins are gone over my head." After several things he answers; "I must tell you all, that what David speaks here, he speaks from himself; and all that David speaks *from himself*, was not truth; David might mistake, that God should charge his sins upon him:" and I also coincide with the Doctor, in what he further says: "*Before* a believer doth confess his sin, he may be as certain of the pardon of it, as *after* confession, that there is as much ground to be confident of the pardon of sin to a believer, as *soon as ever he has committed it*, though he hath not made a solemn act of confession, as to believe it, after he hath performed all the humiliation in the world; even though it be *adultery, and murder*; as was the case with David."

Loveg. So that all the contrite language of David, in the 51st psalm, was not only fruitless, but the language of a *lying spirit*; what a horrid perversion of the repentance of David, and how awfully calculated to harden sinners, in their transgressions!

Mal. Sir, I shan't be ashamed to tell you, how finely this *free grace* author proceeds. "But you will say, all the promises of pardon, do run with this proviso, in case men humble themselves; in case men do this, and that; then pardon is theirs; otherwise it is none of theirs.—*Take heed of such doctrine.*—There is nothing but joy, and gladness; there is *not one fit of sadness in any believer*, but he is out of the way." "*God doth no longer stand offended, nor displeased, though a believer, after he is a believer, do sin often;*" "because he doth not find the sin of a believer, to be

his own sin, but he finds it the *sin of Christ* ;” so that “if a man know himself to be in a state of grace, though he be drunk, or commit murder, God sees no sin in him :” “so that what signifies telling believers, except they perform such, and such duties ; except they walk thus, and thus holily ; and do these, and those good works ; they shall come under wrath ; or at least, God will be angry with them ; what do we in this but *abuse the scriptures* ? *We undo all that Christ hath done* ; we injure believers ; *we tell God that he lies to his face.*”

Mer. If it was not following too much the coarse, vulgar style of your beloved author ; I should be apt to tell you to the face, that you lie : in supposing that all but Antinomians abuse the scriptures, and most blasphemously, by making it a point, to insist upon that, which is evangelical, as I trust we all do, and shall do ; “striving together for the hope of the gospel.”

Sav. Ah ! but all strivings are at end with us. One of them told me the other day, “the efficacy of Christ’s death is, to *kill* all activity of graces in his members, that he might *act all, in all.*”

John. Another of them said worse than that to me the other day ; “I see no need to make such a great stir about graces, and looking to hearts ; but give me Christ : I seek not for graces, but for Christ : I seek not for *promises* but for Christ ; I seek not for *sanctification*, but for *Christ* ; tell not me of *meditation*, and *duties*, but tell me of *Christ* ! ! !”

Loveg. This is separating Christ, and holiness with a vengeance ; if this is not making Christ the *minister* of sin, I know not what is. But all this is perfectly consistent, with another daring expression of theirs ; “sin can do a believer no harm.”

Mal. No more it can.—For our great Doctor has declared it, that “they need not be afraid of their sins ; they that have God for their God, there is no sin that ever they commit, *can possibly do them any hurt* : therefore as their sins cannot hurt them, so

there is no cause of fear in their sins committed, there is not *one sin, nor all the sins together, of any believer, can possibly do that believer any hurt.*"

Loveg. Did the Apostle think so, when he wrote the 7th. of the Romans? where he complains of sin, as the greatest plague, and cried, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"

Mal. Our Doctor says, "give me leave to tell you, that the Apostle in this chapter, as I conceive, doth *personate a scrupulous spirit*, and doth not speak out his own present case."

Loveg. In the name of wonder, and of common sense, why not? What can be the reason for such gross, and palpable perversions of scripture, without some design, extremely dangerous, and destructive to the souls of men?

Mal. Sir, I am ready to vindicate the truth still, *Christ alone exalted*, is the great subject our Doctor aimed at. I will therefore read you a few lines further on this subject, before I conclude.—"Now sin is condemned to the believer,* it can do no hurt at all to him. Yea, sins are but *scare-crows*, and *bug-bears to fright ignorant children*: but men of insight, and understanding, see they are *counterfeit things*; they are to know for a certainty, they are but a *made thing*;" *there is no fear from the sins of believers*. All the fearfulness of sin, Christ himself hath drank it—*Sin is dead*, and there is no more terror in it, than *is in a dead lion*:" and so further, "the sins of the times, cannot hurt God's people, though they had a hand in them." And now gentlemen, you shall have my last quotation. "Are you sinful in respect of the prevalence of corruption, let it not come into your mind, that you are worse than

* Because Christ became actually, and personally the sinner; not merely the sacrifice on the sinner's behalf, while the sinner actually, and personally stands as the Saviour; upon this hinge or pivot, the whole machinery of antinomianism, seems to turn.

others ; yea, so often as men fear *affliction from sin committed, so often do they slander the grace of God.*" These Sir, are my general sentiments ; but as yet, I am not quite settled, in all that I have advanced.

Mer. No wonder at that, for there are others, older than yourself, who are " ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Loveg. In all my life time, I never heard before, such dangerous, and bare faced assertions against the holiness, and purity of divine truth. To suppose that souls may be one of the elect of God, and yet be permitted to live in the worst of sins, under the influence of the most atrocious crimes, and die in impenitence, and unbelief ; not only gives the lie to the direct testimony of scripture ; but has an immediate tendency to harden the sinner in his sins ; while the whimsical idea, that Christ was actually made the sinner ; while the sinner takes the Saviour's place ; not only nullifies every idea of the vicarious sacrifice of him that suffered the just for the unjust ; but equally harden the impenitent, since they are now given to believe, that whatever sins they commit, Christ committed them for them ; and that therefore they cannot sin, because Christ virtually sinned for them. But that the holy God should even hate, and abhor, his infinitely, well beloved Son, because he who knew no sin, suffered in the sinner's stead, and was hated of God, as bad as if he had been the Devil himself.—This in my opinion, is most dreadfully profane. No wonder that from such principles, the practical truths of the gospel, should be next subjected to a most profane attack. " All diligence to make our calling and election sure," is treated by men of such sentiments, as a most dangerous error, and even robbing Christ of his glory ; and no wonder at the conclusion of the whole, that if the infatuated antinomian enthusiast can merely from the fond *fancy* of his own mind, conceit himself to be one of God's elect : he is just as safe, whether he dies a Martyr at the stake, or a criminal at the gallows :

for the concluding horrible conceit is, "*Sin can do a believer no harm*;" and whether he sins, or serves God, it is all the same; for God sees no sin in his elect, even while they commit the worst of sins!!!

Mal. Sir, whatever you may think of our doctrines, some of our ministers, are moral, and consistent in their characters.

Loveg. So they should, or suffer the correction of the law; yet I know that others of them, have been most abominably wicked.

Mal. But Sir, those of them who have it to spare, are very generous to the poor.

Loveg. So they ought.—My poor vicarage, and increasing family, allow me to do but little. What great matter is it, to give away that which I don't want for myself? But in whatever they may give, I dare say, they *first* remember themselves.

Mal. Sir, I only meant to say, we are no enemies to morality, upon *proper* principles.

Loveg. No more you should, unless you meant to be candidates for the gallows, or a gaol. But Sir, can any sort of apology be granted for sentiments like yours. When a man can dare to throw open the floodgates of iniquity, by such loose and wanton expressions; can he excuse himself, that he is not so iniquitous? Is not such external morality as this, within the power even of an atheist to perform, while the thin varnish, renders the evil of such pernicious sentiments less suspected, and consequently more fatal to the less cautious among the thoughtless of mankind?

Mer. It is not to be supposed that the devil would walk abroad without a slipper to cover his cloven foot, that he might be the better able to deceive. When he appears like a chimney-sweeper, at once people are set upon their guard, but when dressed like a miller, he is more apt to prevail. But Sir, another evil comes in with all this. A sad indifference respecting the salvation of the souls of men. Instead of seeking after sinners that are gone far

from God, I am told that some of them have actually supposed, that St. Paul was under a sort of carnal or fleshly love to the souls of men, contrary to the decree of election, when he “yearned over souls in the bowels of Jesus Christ,” and while he travailed in birth till Christ was formed within them and when he prayed them in Christ’s stead, to be reconciled to God.” Their principal work is to disturb peaceable congregations that they *may draw away disciples after them*; and thus to fish in their troubled waters, to the grief and perplexity of many minds.

Loveg. That is a fixed principle with them,* that nothing is to be done in addressing the consciences of unawakened sinners.

Mal. Sir, we never call *dead men* to work as you do, for we are sure the non-elect will never come at our bidding. I wonder that you should be always calling *dead sinners* to repentance.

Loveg. Because Christ set us the example. He who alone gives the life still tells us he came, “not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” All the prophets did the same, the general strain of their language was, “turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel!” Did not John the Baptist preach entirely to sinners, that he might call them to repentance? and was it not the great work of the Apostles to preach “repentance towards God, who *commandeth all men to repent*,” and to “pray them in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God,” while even that wretched sinner Simon Magus, was directed to pray, if so be the wickedness of his heart might be forgiven him?

Mal. Well, I don’t want to argue the point any further, but after all, I think it most consistent to preach as our ministers do, to tell the nonelect plainly and publicly, that they have *nothing to say to them*, for that their message is only to the elect.

Loveg. Pray Sir, does election rest with you, or with God?

Mal. O surely it rests with God.

Loveg. So we think, and consequently deliver his message as he has directed us. It is an awful stratagem of the Devil, to prompt ministers who are permitted to believe his lie, to leave ruined sinners unaddressed, and unalarmed, when we are so expressly commanded "to cry aloud and spare not, and to lift up the voice like a trumpet," or in Paul's language, "awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light." I hate this fastidious nonsense. What have we known nothing of divine truth throughout the land, till a few Juvenile upstarts have lately appeared to instruct us?

Mal. Sir, I had better go home, you seem to be much displeased.

Loveg. Not personally at you Sir, but at the sentiments you have advanced, whereby the world is confirmed in all their objections against divine truth, that "we may continue in sin, that grace may abound." In vain we cry, "may God forbid," while they will be happy to fly to such a testimony against us. And though they have not the least apprehension of any truly serious, and sober minded christians being moved away from the purifying truths of the Gospel, by such daring expressions, and impure doctrines, yet all this cannot but bring upon us a day of rebuke and blasphemy, which will be severely felt. Could any infidel upon earth, have wished a better opportunity, for the exercise of his profane ridicule on the sacred doctrine of our election in Christ, and so directly contrary to the word of God, in which the cause and the effect, are solemnly united with each other; that "we are elect according to the foreknowledge of God through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience;" that "we are saved and called with an holy calling." What can be more explicit than St Paul's declaration, that "we are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his dear Son?" and that he hath chosen us that we may "be holy and without blame before him in love?" Is ther

one single instance throughout the Bible, where election is mentioned, unconnected with personal sanctification. as producing the invariable effects of righteousness upon the heart and life?

Mal. Oh Sir, I shall be too late if I don't go directly to Mr. John Crispin's with the indentures, which must be signed this day by twelve o'clock. He has a deal of work, and is going to take another apprentice.

Mr. Malapert retires, and thus the conversation ended. The reader may suppose, how much Mr. Merryman and his company, were disgusted at the daring things they had heard, and should any persons ignorantly assert, that such sentiments can be founded on what is called calvinism, they know not what calvinism means; for in no one instance are they correct: and which may be best known by their direct opposition to each other. The propriety therefore of the expression of Hypercalvinism is what I cannot understand, as though a real lie was lurking under the disguise of truth. Is it to be supposed, that a person who cultivates a very scrupulous attention to integrity, is advancing nearer to knavery, or that such as are aiming at the highest degree of purity in their deportment, are advancing thereby into all that is filthy and impure? Do we get nearer to a point, by advancing further from it? how then is it possible that a high degree of any thing that deserves the name of truth, should lead into the contrary error; will an extreme sense of our total depravity lead us to any thing but extreme humiliation, and self-abasement before God? Can an extreme feeling of our utter inability to help ourselves, and that all our help must come alone from the agency of the Divine Spirit, lead us to any thing, but a more solemn and entire dependance on that agency, for the communications of all that is holy and good? Will an extreme

attention to the eternal obligations we are and must be under, to obey the law, create in us any thing but a most holy and circumspect obedience to its precepts. Assuredly it will, and must be so; and such are the principles that Calvinism, however misrepresented and caricatured, most solemnly avows, while it shall be left to others to vindicate that *lax* law of obedience, which some have imagined to exist that we are to do as well as we can, or that a certain something is still left to the freedom of the will : that a man may give a turn to the scale of the divine favour, whenever he may choose.*

On this many thousands are found most presumptuously to depend, and thereby are tempted most awfully to neglect their immortal concerns, and though all are by no means equally presumptuous, yet such is the antinomianism that arminianism still suggests, while Antinomianism of a grosser kind, speaks without disguise, a language that is peculiarly profane, and grossly bad. Let the doctrines of grace be allowed to speak their own language, and then let it be asked, if the high commanding banner against Antinomianism under every disguise, is not best established in those hands, who from this tower of divine truth, neither allow the sinner to be his own saviour, nor yet can admit a salvation from the damnation that sin deserves, but not from the dominion that sin has usurped.

* See Dialogue 27.

DIALOGUE XXXIX.

BETWEEN MR. AND MRS. WORTHY, AND DR. SKILLMAN
THE PHYSICIAN.

SAD TIDINGS FROM SANDOVER, OCCASIONED BY THE SICK-
NESS AND DEATH OF MR. MERRYMAN.

THERE was a time when I thought that the former dialogues might have concluded these dramatic efforts ; I conceived a better finish could not have been devised, than to lower the claims of sectarian bigotry, so detrimental to that brotherly love, notwithstanding minor differences, which the genuine spirit of vital christianity, will most assuredly inspire. To this however, another was added, in order to show the evils which must result, where marriage connexions, (on which so much depends,) are rashly formed, when both the courter, and the courted, blinded by a fond partiality, deceive each other, and lay a foundation of misery for themselves, which follows them through life, till followed to the grave.

But we live in a world, chequered with an abundance of misery, because of our sinfulness before God ; yet still most graciously blended, with rich displays of mercy, among those to whom the promise belongs ; that “all things shall work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose.” No doubt but that my pious readers, must be highly delighted with the character of Mr. Merryman, so pleasant in his temper so cheerful in his disposition, so lively and so lovely in all

his manners, and withal, so truly devoted to God, and beneficial as a Minister to the souls of men.

Can my readers be prepared to bid adieu to the character of one so dear? Is patience, and resignation, to the sovereign will of God, to be so sharply tried, should he be called to hear, that the delightful Merryman is now no more? What strength of holy submission must have been needed to possess the minds of his relatives, in order to part with such kindred blood, and still to say, ‘thy will be done!’ and how could the people of Sandover, bring their minds under the deprivation of such a Minister, to say, “the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord;” and what must even his very enemies have felt under the departure of such a man, while blessed with the holy art of disarming the most inveterate of them, by an affectionate, and delightful simplicity of disposition, as must have made them sometimes wonder at themselves, how they could hate a man like him. But who can prevent the fatal hand of disease, from falling upon the best beloved of the human race? or who can trace the dispensations of Providence, that takes away the most desirable, and shining characters, in the midst of their usefulness, and in the prime of life? while the wicked, and the worthless are permitted to live, and seemingly for no other purpose, than by their vile example to spread contagion and death? Still he is a Sovereign. He has a right to do what he will; while as a *holy* Sovereign, whatever he does, must be right, and though it is the highest wickedness to call the Almighty to the bar of our judgment, by profanely asking, “what doest thou?” yet surely it must be acknowledged, that while the righteous are the greatest blessing the earth can enjoy, by our sinfulness we forfeit our mercies, and in judgment he deprives us of them; while the wicked who are our greatest curse, in deserved wrath, as an evil blight, he permits still to exist.

But before we relate the painful tidings of the de-

parture of Mr. Merryman, my readers may wish to hear somewhat further of this excellent, and engaging man.

He was no sooner made a partaker of grace that accomplished a change so glorious, than he set himself to work to communicate the knowledge of that salvation to others ; the effects of which he so well understood, from the happy result upon his own mind.

It immediately became his constant study, how all his parishioners might be the partakers of the like precious faith with himself. He not only set up Sunday schools, but established other little charitable institutions, for visiting the sick, and relieving the poor, whereby he saved many of them from the bad way of seeking aid by parochial relief, which has such a fatal tendency to degrade the mind, while by the same means, he engaged their affectionate attention to his kind admonitions, for their everlasting good.

Besides this, he was in the habit of going around his Parish, into every hamlet, and almost every cottage, collecting the people of his charge, in small assemblies ; and then with his Bible in his hand, and the love of God and of souls in his heart, he would aim at their instruction, in the most engaging style, and afterwards enforce it by such familiar conversation, as astonishingly won the affections of all, if not to God, yet to Mr. Merryman, as being too captivating in all his manners, for the most rugged, and untutored to resist.

On these occasions, he would diligently inquire if any neglected public worship on the Sabbath, and what were their excuses for such a neglect. The like attention was paid to their children, whether they properly prized the opportunities provided for their gratuitous instruction ? and what they could say for themselves, in suffering their innocent offspring, to be so ill used by them, as to permit them to be absent from these useful schools ? As most people aim at

an excuse for doing that which is wrong, it struck his active mind, that one common excuse, the want of proper apparel, might be obviated by the formation of a society, for this laudable purpose. The plan was no sooner proposed, than adopted. He convened his female friends together at Sandover, and formed them into a *working society*, for the benefit of the industrious poor, making it at the same time, a school of instruction for some of the poor female children, that they might learn the same useful art. Of this society Mr. Merryman became the President, while other decent and benevolent characters, who had a little time, and property to spare, were happy to associate themselves together, that they might form a little *manufactory*, more immediately for the children of the industrious poor; while the benefit of the same institution was extended to the parents also. And while many benevolent friends, would be sending their kind presents of new bought materials for these purposes, from different shops, yet the principal design was of a humbler nature; viz. to fabricate the cast off clothes of those who could consistently spare them, into smaller garments for the children's use.

In order to facilitate this kind design, the reader will not be surprized, when he is informed that Mr. Merryman, with his accustomed simplicity, and affability of mind, would request, even from the pulpit, too frequently made the mere oracle of priestly importance, that all such cast off garments might be sent to his house, as a present to the poor, and which would be thankfully received by him.

As designs of this kind, are soon put into circulation, through the good will of some, and the envy of others, no wonder that this was made a matter of triumph by Mr. Archdeacon Smoothtongue, and Mr. Spiteful, that the Rectory house at Sandover, was turned into a *ragman's shop*, and that Merryman had been *crying from the pulpit*, "*old clothes.*" But while the one had little more than the farce, and form of

religion in his proud, and priestly appearance, without one dobt of its divine realities ; and while the other from the mere ravings arising from the enmity of his heart, would be casting his envenomed reflections against this benevolent, and excellent youth, whose free, easy, and not less useful conduct, was such a reproof to those who have no other design of living, but as they live to themselves ; their invidious sneers were justly deemed by others, as being beneath contempt. But it still remains with me to tell, how that in an unprotected hour, according to our dark conceptions, this interesting, and useful man, even in the faithful discharge of the duties of his office, was brought to an untimely grave.

In the former editions of these dialogues, this event was made known by a sort of circuitous information, which would not admit a detail of some circumstances, which, though painful, may still be profitable to the reader's mind. It is best that he should have it as a family event, as thereby the narration is likely to be more correct, and much more interesting to those, who feel under such family calamities, as Christians should.

He was called to visit one of his parishioners, who was highly infected with a putrid fever, which, after a few days deprived him of his life. This poor man, greatly alarmed at his unprepared state, sent for Mr Merryman. He seeing him in such deep distress, probably continued in the infected room, highly contaminated with putrid air, and also very close, longer than prudence might osherwise have suggested ; and further promised to repeat his visit on the following day, requesting that some of the neighbours might then attend in an adjoining cottage, that he might improve the event of the sudden seizure of this thoughtless sinner. He went, but found him so deranged by the vehemence of the fever, as entirely to preclude him from deriving any advantage, from his beneficial advice, but alas ! he had scarcely finished his improving, and impressive exhortation, before he

began to feel in himself, some strong symptoms of the same disease ; after his return home, he immediately retired to his chamber, but the ragings of his fever, entirely deprived him from his rest, so that in the morning, very considerable alarm was excited, the feelings of Mrs. Merryman began to be acutely awakened, lest she should lose the best of husbands, after such an early, and happy union with each other ; while the inhabitants of Sandover, so happy in such a Minister, were filled with general consternation, lest they should be deprived of one of the greatest blessings they could enjoy.

From such alarming symptoms, it was deemed necessary, to call in the best medical aid the neighbourhood could afford, Dr. Skillman, a Physician of the first eminence, was immediately sent for, and though he lived at a considerable distance from Sandover, yet his patient received his first visit from him before the setting sun ; unwilling to alarm the feelings of the family at Brookfield Hall, by Dr. Skillman's advice, the message designed for them, was deferred until the effect of a powerful medicine, which was immediately administered, had been first proved.

This seemed to have had some favourable effect, the message was delayed for a few days longer, but the fever soon afterwards recovered its strength, while from several incoherent expressions, it appeared he was no longer collected, through the vehemence of the disease. It was now deemed necessary, that the family at Brookfield Hall, should be informed of this alarming event, without any farther delay ; and Dr. Skillman wishing to visit an old patient, residing at Mapleton, offered to be the messenger of these sad tidings, as being the best qualified to give the most correct report of his patient's disease, and also to consult what further steps it might be necessary to take, to save if possible the life of this invaluable young Minister. However the reader will soon discover, that whatever ability the Doctor possessed in his professional character, he was but ill instructed

in that celestial science, which had made Mr. Merryman so good a man. The Doctor accordingly took the journey, and having been introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Worthy, after the usual salutations, the dialogue thus commenced.

Dr. Skillman. [To Mr. Worthy.] Sir, I am sorry to be the messenger of such painful news respecting the health of your son-in-law, Mr. Merryman.

Mrs. Wor. Dear Sir, you quite alarm us ; I hope he is not dangerously ill.

Dr. Skillm. Why Madam, I am sorry to inform you, that after having twice visited one of his parishioners in a putrid fever, he has caught the infection.

Mr. Wor. But I hope Sir, the symptoms at present are not dangerous.

Dr. Skillm. Not to flatter you Sir, I must confess that some of the symptoms have considerably alarmed us.

Mrs. Wor. I have not a child of my own, that I can love better than him, he is the best of husbands, and the best of men. O what my poor daughter must feel ! especially, just after her lying in. How will she support it ? we must go directly and see them.

Dr. Skillm. I would not wish Madam that you should determine upon that too hastily, I am sorry to say, that the fever has greatly injured his recollection, and the less he has to agitate his mind, the better we can grapple with the disease.

Mrs. Wor. What Sir, is he so bad, as that none of us can be permitted to see him ?

Dr. Skillm. Certainly it is most advisable that his mind should be kept as still, and as quiet as possible. I have frequently found it needful, to request Mrs. Merryman, to retire out of the room. He seeing her so deeply distressed, that it greatly agitates his feelings.

Mrs. Wor. Oh Sir ! and is there not great reason to fear, lest my daughter should catch the infection !

Dr. Skillm. I have no apprehensions of that sort : for where rooms are properly ventilated, and other precautions duly attended to, (which was not the case in the house he unhappily visited,) fevers are seldom infectious. But I am sorry to say, he is a bad subject for such a disease, for whoever he sees, it is sure to set him *roving* about religion.

Wor. Ah dear man ! I know that is uppermost in his mind at all times ; but I hope that if his talking warmly, and affectionately about religion, is the only proof of a temporary derangement, he is not quite so bad as you may suppose.

Dr. Skillm. O Sir ! but at times he speaks quite irrationally on that subject. Though he is so ill, yet he is perpetually saying, that he must preach on Sunday, while he fancies he is preaching some of his extempore sermons, talking about his religion, and thinks he is *saying his prayers* to some of the people.

Wor. But as these subjects were so much his delight when he was well, I should hope the thoughts of them can do him no harm, now he is ill.

Dr. Skillm. But he is so restless about serving his Church. And when I told him, that I thought I could obtain for him the assistance of Canon Careless, who seldom does any duty himself, he immediately replied, that he would rather the Church were shut up, than it should be served by one, who is not a christian. What a proof of derangement, to suppose, that a Canon of one of our Cathedral Churches is not a christian !

Wor. Ah Sir ! my dear son-in-law, (after he had felt the power that made him such an altered man, when compared with what he was, even some time after he was in orders,) knows better than to suppose, that all are christians, because they merely bear the christian name. He well knows the character of the Canon, who is paid so plentifully from the income of his valuable living, besides his Canonry. While he

does nothing, or next to nothing, for all that he receives. Who that loves the world, would not but be a christian for such rewards as these.

Dr. Skillm. But Sir, though the Canon is not so correct, and diligent in his religion, as he should be, yet is it not universally admitted among men of science, especially if they aim at being eminent in that science, that no person whatsoever, can be permitted to share the honours belonging to their profession, till such time, as that they have been examined respecting their knowledge in that profession? Is not the same knowledge required in the *science of Christian theology*? Was not the Canon christen'd in that faith, and always *bred up to it*? was he not sent to Oxford to be a teacher of that religion, as I was taught Pharmacy, Surgery, and other branches necessarily connected with the knowledge of our profession? and has he not lately taken his Doctor's degree in his profession, which is looked upon to be such a high honour among theologians? If he be not of the christian religion, of what religion can he be?

Wor. Ah Sir! the *science of Christian theology*, as you call it, may be found in a thousand Universities, and treasured up in ten thousand heads, but all this will not do as a substitute for the grace of God in the heart. I do not wonder that my dear, sick son-in-law, wishes in the midst of the reveries which his fever may have created, for a better teacher than Canon Careless, for his beloved flock, on whom of late he has bestowed such an abundance of pains.

Dr. Skillm. I must confess Sir, if I did not attend to my profession a little more correctly, than the Canon does to his, my patients would be ill satisfied with such neglect.

Wor. While it rests with you, only to take care of the perishable body, but with him the immortal soul, what profane neglect!

Dr. Skillm. Why Sir, though I do not like to speak against the religion of my country, (as some religion is necessary to keep the common people in

awe,) yet I have often thought, that if the general of the Clergy *really believed in their own religion* they would practice it better than they do, and they doubt it, can it be necessary for us to believe it?

Wor. O Sir! I am sorry your opinion should be so loose about matters of such importance.*

Dr. Skillm. But Sir, you quite mistake me: I have a high opinion of the Christian religion, as containing the purest system of morals, and consequently the best calculated for general good; but still I have my doubts, whether the French philosophy be true, viz. that "death is an eternal sleep." I do not know that we have any *proof* of the immortality of the soul, though I hope it may be so.

Wor. But really Sir, there is a something in us so far beyond what brutes possess, that most people and nations, however ignorant, have discovered a spark of immortality in themselves, that death could never quench.

Dr. Skillm. If I have my doubts about these things they have never prompted me to be guilty of that which is immoral, and if I suppose that this life on earth is all that we have, I am naturally excited by such doubts, as a physician, to pay the greater attention to the cases of my patients.

Wor. Ah Sir! I should like to put into your hands some excellent volumes I have in my library, respecting the evidences of Christianity, that the most obstinate infidel, could never confute; but the strongest evidence, is what it really accomplishes on the human heart; and your patient at Sandover, has happily evidenced the proof of this, in a manner that has surprised all who know him.

Mrs. Wor. But O Sir! do let us waive the pre-

* The bad lives of the Clergy, is no more an argument against Christianity, and what we all should be, than the bad tricks of a set of odious pettifoggers, can be produced against the practice of common honesty, which is, or should be, the bounden duty of us all.

subject, and try if possible, to pacify his mind respecting the supply of his Church.

Dr. Skillm. Madam, that is half the reason why I came over myself, instead of allowing a messenger to be sent ; for I wish very much to have his mind tranquilised on that subject. He talks much about a Mr. Lovegood. I think he says he is the Minister of this parish, as though no one could preach a good, Christian sermon, but him. But as you know, that I live at a considerable distance, I have not heard much about that gentleman, only that report says, he is rather given to enthusiasm.

Wor. Ah Sir, no one is less given to enthusiasm than Mr. Lovegood. But as it is now so late in the week, it would be next to impossible to procure a supply for his own Church, were he even to attempt it ; and were he to shut it up, in order that he might serve another at a distance, he would be subject himself to considerable blame ; especially, as it is rather the duty of the churchwardens of Sandover, to seek for a supply under such circumstances.

Dr. Skillm. Really Sir, I am not conversant about such laws. But as Mr. Merryman dislikes the Canon so much, where would be the harm if Sandover Church was to be shut, until he recovers. Surely the people have been sufficiently instructed *how to perform their duty*, without going to Church every Sunday. As for me, it is well known that I have no time for such sort of services, excepting now and then for example's sake. But I think if a man has but a *good heart*, that I conceive to be a thousand times better, than going to church. Some may please their Creator in one way, and some in another. If I do my duty to my patients, and occasionally give my advice to the poor gratis ; I cannot conceive the Almighty will require more from me, so that supposing there is a future state, I hope my *chance* is not a bad one.

Mrs. Wor. O Sir ! this is not the time to be talking about *good hearts*, and religious *chances*, the grand

question is, what can be done to ease the mind of my dear son-in-law?

Wor. I know Mr. Lovegood will not be wanting to the utmost of his power, to accomplish Mr. Merryman's wishes; and there is an old clergyman in the neighbourhood, that may be able to give us some assistance: I will send directly to see what can be done.

Mrs. Wor. But, O my dear Mr. Worthy! with your leave, I must go over directly and see how he does. I feel for my poor daughter, as much as for him. If he should die, he will be happy, but what disconsolate widow she will be!

Dr. Skillm. Madam, if you should go, he has not in his power at present, to give you a rational answer, and I fear your presence, would add considerably to the agitation of his mind. [To Mr. Worthy.] I hope Sir, you will persuade Mrs. Worthy, not to determine on the journey just at this time: perhaps after a few days the disease may take a favourable turn: I shall instruct the Apothecary, to watch every turn of the fever, while I am absent, and in point of nursery, and attendance, he has to much of it already.

Mr. Wor. to Mrs. Worthy. I think my dear, the best plan will be, to take the Doctor's advice, at least for the present. Let our feelings give way to reason, and I will go directly to Mr. Lovegood, and settle with him how he can secure Mr. Meek, as a supply for his church, for to-morrow se'nnight; if he can come over here on the Saturday night, and we have only a morning service with us. I can send him back time enough that he may serve his own church in the afternoon, and think as we have always such a large congregation in the afternoon, on such an occasion, it might not be amiss, if I were to send Mr. Goodman, the dissenting minister, he is not above seven miles from us. Mr. Lovegood always speaks of him, as a very pious man; and I am told he preaches very good and plain sermons: and!

might occupy the Sunday-school room, as far as it will hold the people I am sorry to say, that if he were to preach in the church, it would be as bad as high treason.

Mrs. Wor. I heard him once, and he gave us an excellent sermon. But I fear he cannot be here in sufficient time, as the nearer road is bad, and if we send the chaise for him, it will be considerably round.

Wor. Yes, but the people will not regard waiting half an hour, if he will but engage to come.

Mrs. Wor. Though I am so exceedingly anxious to go over to Sandover directly ; yet if I submit to what you, and the Doctor deem best, it must be on this condition, that nothing may prevent my going with Mr. Lovegood next week, if this plan should take place, and until then, I must insist upon it, that a message may be sent every morning, that I may know how he does.

Dr. Skillm. Though I confess I do not understand these different *mixtures of religion* ; and though it seems to me best, that every man should keep to his *own way of thinking*, yet that is no concern of mine. I am very glad Madam, that you have agreed to postpone your visit, at least a few days longer, and I'll assure you, believing Mr. Merryman to be a very good sort of a man in his way, I feel myself not a little anxious for his recovery. I mean therefore to give him another call, before I return home this evening ; though somewhat out of my way : therefore with your leave Sir, I will ring the bell, that I may order the carriage immediately.

While the chaise was getting ready, the Doctor partook of some refreshment, and hastened to repeat his visit to his patient, according to his promise.

Mr. Worthy went next to Mr. Lovegood. It may easily be conjectured, how much Mr. Lovegood was affected, at the alarming tidings from Sandover,

which so seriously threatened the life of his beloved son in the Gospel.

His mind was so greatly overwhelmed on the following sabbath with apprehensions and fears, that he had enough to do, to grapple with the overflowings of his affection for one, he so dearly loved. Though the rumour of Mr. Merryman's dangerous illness, was now become general: and though the looks of Mr. Lovegood, all the while he was reading the service, confirmed the same, yet the strength of his feelings were, in a measure, suppressed, until he got into the pulpit. It was from thence, that the embossed tears, which floated in his eyes, were seen to trickle down his cheeks in large abundance, while with a faltering voice, and extreme difficulty, he uttered these appropriate words for his text, "Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick." It should be left to the reader's imagination to paint, what words can ill express. No wonder that the highly respectable family of Brookfield Hall, were heard to sob with silent grief, and as for Farmer Littleworth, next to the death of his beloved Henry, he seemed to dread the dissolution of this excellent man, while his son Henry, that monument of grace, and power of God, what he felt beyond most others is not to be described, under the apprehension lest he should never see that delightful minister of the word of life, any more; whose conduct at the commencement of life, in some instances, so much resembled his own.

Others also of Mr. Lovegood's congregation, might be brought forward, while thus their weeping Minister began his sermon on this distressing event, but for the present, I forbear. Alas! the same feelings are still to be exercised, when disease had actually accomplished its work; exhibiting at the same time, an exit, the most painful among all those who loved him; and yet the most animating to such as believe in "the glory that shall be revealed," and live under the expectation of that blessedness, which "eye hath not seen, which the ear hath not heard, and which hath

never entered into the heart of man to conceive." At present I must forbear to narrate all Mr. Lovegood advanced on this subject; even a short hint is as much as the design of these dialogues will admit. With the most solemn reverence, he vindicated the justice of God; that we have forfeited all his mercies, and merited all his wrath. That though the removal of the godly, was a great calamity, yet, even under the most awful displays of a bereaving Providence, his restoring mercies, might be favourable to such as humbled themselves before him. That though our Lord loved the family of Lazarus, yet even they were to have the common lot of affliction with others. And that if we should dare to murmur, with silent submission, we should correct our rebellious feelings, and bring our minds to say with the Prophet, "why should a living man complain; a man for the punishment of his sins?" But when he came to his final address, believing from the scriptures "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much;" and feeling how brightly that lovely light shone, which he was the instrument of kindling in that dark town of Sandover; he affectionately requested the prayers of his congregation, the sluices of his affection were again so powerfully opened, that he could say no more. Oh what were then the sensations of this delightful, country congregation! and from which all these village dialogues took their rise; when such a man as Mr. Lovegood, gave such a display of that sympathetic love, which unites us all to him, and in him, towards each other, for his tender mercies' sake.

But the Reader must be further informed, that no favourable tidings having been sent from Sandover, respecting a hope of Mr. Merryman's recovery, Mrs. Worthy, and Mr. Lovegood, went with sad and sorrowful hearts, according to the plan already settled, while circumstances prevented their return, according to their first design.

It was deemed necessary, that Mr. Lovegood

should continue at Sandover, another sabbath. He applied to the venerable Dr. Orderly on that occasion, who readily consented, that his curate, Mr. Sedate, should lend his aid, and though the goodness of the man, was admired by all, yet if he did not altogether express himself in a strain, so evangelical as Mr. Lovegood ; yet being far superior to many others, whose preaching, and practice, are alike heathenish, his kind services, were gratefully, and thankfully received. The result of Mrs. Worthy's and Mr. Lovegood's visit, will be communicated immediately upon their return.

DIALOGUE XL.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

BETWEEN MR. AND MRS. WORTHY, AND MR.
LOVEGOOD.

MR. WORTHY, and Mr. Lovegood, were absent about a fortnight, attending upon Mr. Merryman at Sandover. Upon their return, after a few introductory salutations, the dialogue thus commenced.

Mr. Wor. [To Mrs. Worthy.] O my dear ! is our beloved son-in-law, yet alive ?

Mrs. Wor. O yes, and I trust by the blessing of God, he will yet live, and continue to be a blessing to us all.

Loveg. O Madam, we should not be too sanguine in our expectations—Though he has passed the most dangerous crisis of the fever ; yet the Doctor has his apprehensions, how far he may yet recover from the consequences of such an alarming attack. There are some symptoms, he does not like.

Wor. O let us hope, that a little good nursing, may yet restore him to his friends, his family, and his Church. But do let us hear all that has passed, while you were at Sandover.

Loveg. O Sir ! what I have seen, what I have heard, and what I have felt, is more than I can express.

Wor. But tell me, how has my dear daughter borne the shock.

Mrs. Wor. Her distress has been astonishing. Yet she has been astonishingly supported, but Mr. Lovegood had better tell you all that has passed from the beginning.

Loveg. On our first arrival, we found Mrs. Merryman in the greatest perplexity and distress, you may well suppose; and as for Mr. Merryman, instead of finding him better, he was evidently much worse. He lay almost in a perpetual stupor, what little he said, was frequently incoherent, though always upon the best subject; and sometimes the things he said were most delightful. But by the particular request of Dr. Skillman, neither of us went to see him that night, nor the next day. Nor would it have done him any good, as the fever had rendered him remarkably deaf.

Wor. I should like to hear some of the good things he said?

Loveg. Yes, Sir, and I should like to tell you of them. But as it was a task, far beyond what Mrs. Merryman could perform, I feel myself obliged to Mr. Robert Sprightly, for recording some things, which I shall endeavour to repeat.

Wor. Who is this Mr. Sprightly?

Loveg. One of the most pleasant, and amiable youths, I ever met with in all my life. In Mr. Merryman's gay days, they were the gay, and giddy companions of each other. But when Mr. Merryman became an altered character, this young man, was one of the first fruits of his ministry; and this greatly added to the surprise of the whole town! when in an infinitely better way, they became closely united for better purposes. Like Jonathan and David, their hearts were one, and they were one with each other, in every design that was profitable, kind, and good. And immediately as Mr. Merryman was taken ill, he was almost perpetually with him; seated at his bed side, night and day, he would wait upon

him with the constant assiduity of a nurse ; in short, if it had not been for him, I question, if Mrs. Merryman could have been supported, under the pressure of her fatigue.

Wor. O what a kind youth ! I shall ever love him for my daughter's sake.

Loveg. O Sir ! if ever you should know him, you would be delighted with him. Such a lively, pleasant, and animated disposition, and withal, so truly devoted to God.—He is quite the counterpart of Mr. Merryman.

Wor. I hope I shall soon be acquainted with him. But what had he to say of the frame of Mr. Merryman's mind, when he was first taken ill ?

Loveg. Upon the whole, from the very first he seemed to possess in a high degree, a resigned and submissive spirit. But it appeared, that the reflection of what he had been, came home at times to his recollection, with considerable remorse, and grief ; lamenting exceedingly, how much he had to undo, of the evils he had done by his light, and frothy conduct, before the grace of God took possession of his heart. But one time in particular, with tears in his eyes, it seems he cried : O what would I give ! if I could recal the time that is now forever past, when as a wicked, and careless minister, both in my life and doctrine, I was the cause of the ruin and delusion of so many souls. It was I, that persuaded poor Jack Trifler to go with me to the ball, where he first met with those who poisoned him with disease, that led him to the grave. What an awful charge against me, that precious souls should have been ruined by me. But now they are irrecoverably lost. And when Mr. Sprightly mentioned, the free forgiveness he had preached to others, and which he had received himself, he immediately cried, Yes, yes ; I know that God has forgiven me, but for all that, I never can forgive myself. And when Mr. Sprightly began to speak of the good he had done, since he had been blessed with the grace of God, and mentioned himself,

as one among many others, that would have eternal reason to bless God, for his ministry, he seemed to smile ; took him by the hand, and said ; Yes my dear Robert, and this is the only reason which makes me wish to live that I may bring more sinners to Jesus Christ : though I am ashamed of myself that I have not been more earnest, and zealous in the cause of the salvation of souls.

At another time he said, I hope my dear Robert, I shall not infect you with my fever, as I have infected others with my sinful ways ; well, though the Lord has permitted me to run into sad lengths of dissipation, yet it might have been, that he might again make known his patience, forbearance, and grace to the very chief of sinners, who are enabled to come to him, who in no wise can cast us out.

Wor. It seems then, while he was in a humble frame, he was by no means in a desponding frame.

Loveg. I believe just the reverse ; for while he felt and lamented, that he had been such a sinner, he could still rejoice, that he was a sinner saved.

Mrs. Wor. But in saying these things, he did not speak, as though the fever had disturbed his recollection.

Loveg. By no means, but this was at the beginning of his illness, when there were some hopes, that his disease was about to take a favourable turn. However, it seems that soon afterwards, he became frequently incoherent ; but in the midst of his reveries, his mind was still engaged upon the best of subjects. At one time he supposed himself to be preaching : and at another time, he would seem to imagine, that he was praying with the people ; while what he said, on these occasions, was astonishingly affecting and fine, even superior to what he ever said in the best days of his recollection, and health.

Wor. When did you first see him ?

Loveg. It was thought necessary that I should see him on the Saturday morning, to set his mind at rest about the supply of his Church, for on the Sunday

before, it was entirely shut up, and the consternation of the people was inexpressible.

Wor. [To Mrs. Worthy.] Did you go up stairs with Mr. Lovegood?

Mrs. Wor. Oh no ! I was advised not, and I staid below with our daughter, for whenever he perceived her in the room, seeing her much affected, it greatly increased his agitation : and again he had sad apprehensions lest she might catch the disease. It being necessary that he should be kept as quiet as possible. Mr. Sprightly was the only person, that went into the room with me, and being then in a sort of restless dose, I stood by his bed side some time, before he took any notice of me, and while I was waiting till he awoke, I heard him repeat the following lines, which I could not have understood, if I had not known the hymn.

Thou say'st, thou wilt thy servants keep
In perfect peace, whose minds shall be,
Like new born babes, or helpless sheep,
Completely staid dear Lord on thee.
How calm their state, how truly blest,
Who find in thee their promis'd rest !

Bid the tempestuous rage of sin,
With all its wrathful fury die ;
Let the Redeemer dwell within,
And turn my sorrows into joy.
In thy dear arms of love carest,
Give me to find thy promis'd rest.

After repeating these lines, he cried, I cannot sing, I cannot sing, I wish I could. Just then he opened his eyes, looked at me with the kindest affection, for a few seconds, and then said, What are you there my dear Mr. Lovegood ? that precious man who saved my soul from ruin ! Who was it that carried me over to Brookfield to see him ? Being too much overcome to answer him, Mr. Sprightly said, no dear Sir, you are still at Sandover : Mr. Lovegood is come over to see you, and to supply the Church for you to-morrow. He replied, dear man, how kind !

I shan't be able to read prayers for him. Robert, lift me up in bed. I am very thirsty. Nurse, bring me some barley water : he partook of it, and cried, "let him that is athirst come ; yea, whosoever will, let them come and partake of the waters of life freely." "My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God !" Then he addressed himself to me, and said, Tell the people to-morrow, O tell them all, "how I long over them in the bowels of Jesus Christ." I hope there will not be one pew in the Church that will not have some sinner to feel as I did when you preached your visitation sermon. I think I am clear from the blood of all of them, but if not, I beg their pardons ten thousand times. What he said so completely overcame me, that I was obliged to retire to the window to vent my feelings. He then broke out into a profuse perspiration, when he asked where I was gone. I returned and helped to wipe off the rolling drops from his head and hair ; and while we were performing the office, he cried, If every hair of my head, and every drop that falls from my face, were to be turned into a tongue ; and were I to live ten thousand years, they should all be employed in telling the salvation of Christ, and in singing of his redeeming love ; and then added, I can neither praise him as I should, nor yet as I would. I am so weak, lay me down again. This gave me an opportunity of saying, We will retire, that you may be more composed. You must think Sir, this was quite as much as I could bear.

Wor. But this seemed at least, like a short revival of his intellectual powers.

Loveg. Yes Sir, and what he said at such intervals, was astonishingly delightful.

Wor. How did you get through the Sunday services ?

Loveg. With the greatest difficulty imaginable. What the people felt, what we all felt, is not to be described. His fascinating, and affectionate behaviour, highly enriched by the grace of God, has rendered

him one of the most beloved, and esteemed characters, that can be well conceived.

Wor. What was your morning text ?

Loveg. "Behold I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, unless thou repent." Rev. ii. 5.

Wor. I fear on such a subject, and on such an occasion, your own feelings, and those of the congregation, must have been sharply exercised.

Loveg. Indeed Sir, they really were. It could scarcely be called preaching, my mind was so overpowered by the event, that I could not help my feelings, nor could the congregation command theirs. They all seemed to feel, that the loss of such a minister would prove the greatest they could sustain : but still I thought it an excellent sign, that they knew how to appreciate the labours of such an invaluable man.

Mrs. Wor. I was fearful it would be so : and as my daughter was so low, I thought it my duty to stay at home with her ; and I fear this added considerably to the people's alarm.

Wor. What was your afternoon subject ?

Loveg. "Prepare to meet thy God." But I did all in my power, to avoid all personal reference to the present event ; and only improved it in general terms, as well as I could ; though after all, I found I had enough to do with the people's feelings, as well as with my own.

Wor. Though it was deemed necessary to keep Mr. Merryman as quiet as possible, yet I suppose you saw him occasionally, through the course of the week.

Loveg. O Sir ! we thought it prudent, not to have any ringing, or chiming of the bells, before the services, lest it should disturb him ; and that filled him with surprise, lest I should not have performed my promise, respecting the duty at the Church : and I was obliged to go up on the Sunday evening, to pacify his mind on that subject.

Wor. What was the result of that interview ?

Loveg. It was a very short one. I assured him I had performed both the services for him, and how much he was upon the hearts of the people, that he might still live to declare among them, that great power and grace which had been made known to him ; he then quoted that passage and said, blessed be God, " I know what is the hope of his calling, (" Our high calling of God in Christ Jesus,") and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints ; and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, who believe, according to the working of his mighty power : " * then he paused, and exclaimed, O what grace, what power, what a glorious power, to reach a heart like mine ! Thus far he appeared most blessedly recollected, and then he closed his eyes for a while, and began to ramble, but in a most pleasant style. He told me that he had been sailing all the day, down a delightful river ; that there were most enchanting singings on each side of its banks : and that he came to a most pleasant place, where a beautiful great tree grew, and that Angels were singing upon every branch and twig of it, and then added, O how grieved I was, when I lost sight of that tree, and when I could no longer hear the singings of those Angels, that so charmed my heart ! I immediately said, my dear friend, we'll retire, and perhaps you will hear the same Angels sing again. He immediately said, O no ! you must not go yet : you must pray before you go. We knelt down, offered up a short prayer, and immediately retired. However I could perceive by this interview, that he was in a most blessed, and even enviable state of mind ; and I had then my fears, that he would not be long on earth, as he was so fit for heaven.

Wor. Surely after this, you would not deny yourself the privilege of giving him, at least a short visit every day, while you continued at Sandover.

* Eph. i. 18, 19.

Loveg. Every morning after breakfast, I made him a short visit, and offered up a short prayer; while day after day, he appeared weaker, and weaker, and getting worse, and worse, filling us with increasing apprehensions, that every day might be his last.

Wor. Was his mind still kept in the same happy state?

Loveg. I think more so. It was evident that while his body was growing weaker, his mind became more recollected and calm. One morning, when I requested him not to exert himself, he whispered out the following expression:

In silent stillness of the mind,
My God, and there my heav'n I find.

And then added, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day."* And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep my heart, and mind, through Christ Jesus."†

On another morning after prayer, he said, taking up some expressions that I dropt, "Blessed be God, I can enter into the holy of holies, by the blood of Jesus; by that new and living way, which he hath consecrated for me." Though I am ashamed of what I have been, yet if I die, I can have "boldness and access with confidence in that grace, in which I stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Then he asked me the question, how is my most dear wife? oh how it grieved me, to see her stand by my bed side, dropping tear after tear! If she knew how peaceable and happy I am in the love of Christ, she would rather rejoice with me, than grieve over me; for "by believing in him, I can rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory," and then said,

And when I'm to die,
Receive me, I'll cry,
For Jesus hath lov'd me, I cannot say why.

* 2 Tim. i. 12.

† Phil. iv. 7.

All these things, he spoke with extreme difficulty, being exceedingly weak, for the fever seemed principally to be on his chest. But on the Saturday morning, the nurse alarmed us excessively, by informing us that he had altered for death.

Mrs. Wor. Yes, and she was so abrupt in her information, that my poor daughter was immediately thrown into strong hysterics, and all the house into the greatest consternation; while the report soon got wind, and spread throughout the town; and it seems that it was reported by some, that he actually was dead: while the universal agitation, and distress of the people, were inconceivable.

Loveg. No wonder, that such as are so universally beloved, should be as universally lamented.

Wor. What could you all do under such distressing circumstances?

Loveg. Sir, Mrs. Worthy continued with Mrs. Merryman, while Mr. Sprightly, who was almost always with us, went up stairs, as we thought, to take our final leave of our dear departing friend, apparently senseless, and nearly speechless; only uttering some things to himself which we could not understand; yet with a complacency of countenance, that greatly surprised us: but still supposing that every breath might be his last.

Just then, Dr. Skillman came into the room, as we all thought, to pay his last visit to his dying patient. He immediately felt his pulse, and for a considerable time: and then, to our great surprise, pronounced that his was not the pulse of a dying man; and that the dangerous crisis of the fever was now actually passed, that he had seen others in the same state, who had recovered, and that the present stupor was rather to be considered as a sound sleep, which his nearly exhausted nature required; that he should therefore call on another patient, and return, for that he believed he would yet revive.

The Doctor had not long left the room, before he opened his eyes, and asked, "How long have you

been here ? I have slept most sweetly, and O how comforted I have been ! how delighted with such singing, and how favoured with such sights as I never beheld before !" and then he added,

O the delights, the heav'nly joys,
The glories of the place,
Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams
Of his o'erflowing grace.

He rested a short space, and then added a part of another hymn, from the pious Dr. Watts, resting awhile between each stanza.

There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign ;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
And never with'ring flow'rs,
Though death, that narrow sea, divides
This heav'nly land from ours.

O could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unclouded eyes !

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's streams, nor death's cold flow,
Should fright us from the shore.

Then he added, " My rest has so wonderfully refreshed me, that I feel I want something that is nourishing, which I have never felt since I have been ill before."

You must think I could not continue long in the room before I communicated these pleasing tidings to Mrs. Merryman, and perhaps in this, [to Mrs. Worthy] as you well know, Madam, in order to ease a mind, agonising with excessive grief, like the nurse before me, I rather too abruptly informed her, of this unexpected revival, after having been brought so

near the expected hour of his dissolution. Her joy, as it might be supposed, was not less excessive, than her grief, which you know, I attempted to moderate to the best of my power, mentioning how difficult it would still be, for the constitution to recover itself, after so deep a plunge.

Wor. I suppose, after this revival, my daughter was permitted to visit him.

Loveg. Under such circumstances, it would have been a hard task indeed, to have prevented one of such an affectionate mind, from visiting a husband, that appeared like one, just rising from the grave. But we requested her, to compose her mind to the utmost of her power, as tranquillity and rest, still appeared so absolutely necessary, even for the preservation of his life. The interview, as you may suppose, was a very affecting one, and when he began telling her, how happy he had been during his illness, and when she began to weep for joy, we took the liberty to interrupt them, requesting them to wait till after a few days, when he might be blessed with the recovery of a little of his strength, and be better able to tell of those good things, which had been such a consolation to his mind, under such a near approach to the grave.

Mrs. Wor. I thought it providential, that Dr. Skillman repeated his visit just at that time, and was ushered into the room; for he, being a stranger to such sort of conversation, soon interrupted it; and again urged the need of rest, as being just then peculiarly desirable, and that Mr. Merryman need not trouble himself about religion then, as he hoped his life might yet be spared.

Loveg. Yes Madam, and you remember when I told him, that Merryman's composure of mind, arose from that calmness, which true religion was sure to inspire, his answer was, Well, well, that is all I wish to recommend; let every one be happy in their own way. I had designed to have continued here all night, but as my patient is so much better,

nothing is needed, but good nursing, and strengthening medicines, which I shall order directly, and then return home. After he had written another prescription, he left us.

Wor. What a surprising effect must have been produced upon the minds of the people, as soon as it became circulated through the town !

Loveg. Yes, and the more so, as it was scarcely known that a change had taken place, as we were all waiting until that afternoon, under the most fearful apprehensions lest every breath should be his last.

Wor. The feelings of your mind must have been very differently exercised, to what they were the Sunday before.

Loveg. The contrast was astonishing. On the former sabbath, every heart was ready to burst with grief ; but on the next, they were equally elated with the strongest sensations of joy. This joy, I endeavoured to moderate to the best of my power ; but that passage then struck me, as being so immediately appropriate, that I could not refrain from taking it as my text : “ Ye were full of heaviness, because ye heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick, nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.”* And while I endeavoured to improve the event that had so elated our hopes, it was not to be described what an ecstasy of joy was evidenced in every corner of the Church. Many, even that were enemies to divine truth, were yet friends to Mr. Merryman, and anxious for his recovery. Old Farmer Bitterman, a near relative of Mr. Spiteful, alone was heard to say, he could not understand, why people should make such a fuss about this parson Merryman, as though no other clergyman could be found as good as he. But others knew better how to appreciate so good a man, and to rejoice in the hopes given, that he might still be spared.

* Phil. ii. 26, 27.

Wor. But after the Sabbath, during the rest of your stay at Sandover, I hope he continued to mend, as rapidly as might be reasonably expected.

Loveg. Quite so. He could sit up in his bed, take as much food as was desirable ; and talk cheerfully, and pleasantly to those who were surrounding him ; but at the same time, in such a style, like a man just come out of Heaven. But then he has a hacking cough, which prevents him from taking as much rest as he should, and complains of a tightness upon his chest, which still alarms us.

Wor. I am afraid then, that all is not yet safe ?

Loveg. I hope it may.—Though I rather fear, the Doctor thinks otherwise ; he advises him to light diet, and as soon as he can be removed, for a change of air.

Mrs. Wor. Yes, and that matter is already settled. As soon as he recovered sufficient strength for the journey I have made him promise to come over to us ; and this will be a great relief to my daughter's mind. She is afraid if he continue at Sandover, that the innumerable calls, and the affectionate attention of the people, will be too much for him. And then she knows that from the ardent desire of his mind, to do all the good he can, he will begin his accustomed services, sooner than he should. He hopes in less than a fortnight, to make a beginning, of at least, one short sermon on a Sunday, though at present, he is as weak as a child.

Loveg. I am afraid that Dr. Skillman's prohibition will not be attended to, which is, not to begin any duty, at least for a month. But his great perplexity is, to procure a proper person to supply his Church.

He talks much of Mr. Brightman, who lost his curacy, by differing from his Rector about Baptismal regeneration, and because he could not preach conditional justification.

Wor. He is certainly a very desirable man ; but is he not now engaged with Mr. Whimsey ?

Loveg. Yes, but I have lately had another letter

from him, complaining that he is as badly off, as he was before. Mr. Whimsey is a strange, wild enthusiast.

Wor. Then does he want another situation ?

Loveg. He certainly does, Sir.

Wor. Then let him be written to immediately, that my dear son-in-law's mind, may be set at rest. If he should so far recover, as to be able to do the whole of his duty, yet for a considerable while, he should have all the relaxation, and ease, his situation will admit of. And besides, a supernumerary clergyman of his character, and abilities, would be a considerable acquisition in his neighbourhood ; and as my younger children want a little private tuition, he would be just the man for that office.

Thus matters were settled. Mr. Worthy wrote immediately to Mr. Brightman, to engage him for Sandover, and gave him a liberal offer of support : but he could not in honour, leave his curacy, so early as he wished, as Mr. Whimsey had two Churches to serve.

The best substitute that could be obtained, was Mr. Anything, who would read any sermons that might be put into his hands, so that he passed for something, though in fact, he was nothing. But he could not be persuaded to read more than one sermon on a Sunday, as he said, he had not been accustomed to *double duty*.

Mr. Merryman thus finding, that his Church was but ill supplied, was very unwilling to remove from his beloved flock ; at least, until the desired aid of Mr. Brightman could be obtained. But being under a sort of promise to go to Brookfield Hall, he reluctantly obeyed, as soon as the recovery of his health would admit. He had not been there above three weeks, before he regained such a considerable degree of strength, so far as it had been exhausted by the

fever, that his anxiety to return, was more than could be resisted; especially as a letter from Mr. Brightman, informed the family, that he could not be released from his present engagement, under three months at the soonest.

But still, while this dear man was most confident, that he should be able to resume his accustomed labours, in a short space of time; others had their doubts, lest this fever should bring on a pulmonary consumption; and it is well known, that this complaint is the most fatal, while the most flattering one, that the human frame is subject to.

As the people were ill contented with the supply during his absence; so the reader may suppose the uncommon joy that universally prevailed on his return. But still he left Brookfield Hall, under the strictest engagements, not to begin with any further service, excepting one short sermon on the Sunday morning; while Dr. Orderly, with his accustomed kindness, was willing that his curate Mr. Sedate, as far as he could possibly be spared, should assist him in reading the prayers.

The reader may judge what the congregation felt, when Mr. Merryman, leaning upon the arms of Mr. Sedate, accompanied with Mrs. Merryman, first entered the Church, like one recently risen from the dead; and when he got into the pulpit, though struck with the amazing alteration which disease had made upon a countenance, once of such vivacity, and health, yet how every hand and heart was lifted up, in solemn thankfulness to God, that he was yet spared to serve them in the administration of the word of life.

His first text was very appropriate, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every one whom he receiveth." The affectionate spirit in which he addressed his hearers, words can scarcely describe; while he expressed the feelings of his own mind, during the chastisement, how most graciously he had been supported, hoping that this solemn ad-

monition, might be a warning to them all ; that his zeal might be quickened : and that, on the restoration of his strength, he might devote himself with greater diligence than ever, for their eternal good.

The slow progress he made towards the restoration of his accustomed strength, throughout the following week, increased the apprehensions of many ; while the increasing spirituality of his mind, was the admiration of all. The short sermon he gave the people the Sunday afterwards, from the following words, fully evidenced the truth of this : “ My soul is even as a weaned child.” His heart so overflowed with holy thankfulness, and submission to the will of God, in this sermon, that many thought it was scarcely possible, that such a man could live long upon earth, who had so much of heaven upon his heart.

On the succeeding Sabbath, he was with difficulty dissuaded from preaching, as he had the sacrament to administer. But he could not be contented in reading those most appropriate passages of scripture, without dropping some most appropriate, and affectionate remarks. Though perhaps the formality of Mr. Sedate, might have been a little exercised at this liberty which the curate of Dr. Orderly could scarcely admire, though good Mr. Merryman himself, oftentimes expressed an innocent wish for a little more liberty than the Church allows.

Little did the people of Sandover suppose, that the next sabbath was to be the last, on which they were to hear the voice of their beloved Minister any more. There was not the least abatement, but rather an increase of those symptoms of consumption, which alarmed many of his friends ; though as yet, he seemed not to be alarmed himself. He thought himself somewhat better, yet he was rather astonished he could not regain his strength, but in this he was quite resigned to the will of God. The text he took, and his solemn delivery of it, before he uttered a single syllable of his sermon, had a remarkable effect.

"Eye hath not seen; neither ear heard; neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."* In this sermon however, one would think, that all must have had a presentiment that it must be his last. For with what rapture he described the glories of the eternal world: with what delight he quoted those words, "In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore!" How he begged and entreated his hearers, as for his life, to accept those unutterable joys, and to "flee from the wrath to come;" for that he knew not how soon the tongue that then addressed them, might be silenced in the grave; and that the eye which now wept, while he beheld them, should see them no more for ever. It seems his whole soul was so deeply engaged in the subject, that almost every word was followed with a tear, while the hearts of all the people, were melted down, as the heart of one man: in short, he was so overcome by his own feelings, and with the heat occasioned by such a crowded congregation, that ere he had proceeded fifteen minutes, he quite fainted away. What a scene it must have been to see him thus carried out of the pulpit, from whence he had distributed such an abundance of good! It is supposed this astonishing young, spiritual Sampson slew more by these, his affectionate strokes, in this his last address, than ever he slew throughout all his life.

It seems that on the Thursday following, after a severe fit of coughing, he burst a blood vessel; and the discharge from his lungs was very considerable. This threw Mrs. Merryman into the greatest consternation and grief; while scarce a gleam of hope was left, that his invaluable life could now be preserved.

A message was immediately dispatched to Brookfield Hall, to which place it was deemed absolutely necessary he should be removed, as soon as circum-

1 Cor. ii. 9.

stances would admit. The afflicted Mrs. Merryman was obliged to part with her newborn babe, to another female, in order that she might devote the utmost of her care to a husband, she was so soon to lose.

Mr. Worthy sent his carriage, that he might be removed with all possible tenderness and care ; while Mr. Sprightly, with Mr. Merryman, attended as his supporters on the road, which by its slow progress, was accomplished without any further injury to his bleeding lungs.

This last removal of Mr. Merryman, until he returned in a hearse, produced such a scene of woe throughout Sandover, as Sandover never felt before ; and had it not been for the prudent attention of Mr. Sprightly, half the town would have been at the rectory, to bid him their last adieu. The grief that was evidenced, was not less universal, than he was universally beloved.

Alas ! what must the family of Brookfield Hall have felt ; what Mr. Lovegood must have felt, when he attended to lift him out of the carriage ; and what all the Parish felt, when he entered that house, in which it was supposed he would breathe his last, is more than the writer of these Dialogues, with his briny eyes, has sufficient spirits to narrate.

The next Dialogue will finish the account of the trying, yet triumphant exit of this excellent man : but yet brightens with a pleasing issue, of this most painful event.

DIALOGUE XLI.

BETWEEN MR. WORTHY, MR. LOVEGOOD, MR. BRIGHTMAN,
AND MR. SPRIGHTLY.

THE DEATH AND FUNERAL OF MR. MERRYMAN.

THOUGH Mr. Merryman, as might be supposed, from the flattering nature of the consumption, revived from the depth of that languor, which from the loss of an abundance of blood, he had sustained; yet still his vitals were consuming by the same disease, so that he now found he could attempt nothing further in his delightful work. The necessary supply of his Church was his chief concern. At times he was obliged to put up with Mr. Anything, while Dr. Orderly and his Curate, were as kind as circumstances would admit; Mr. Lovegood at the same time; watched every opportunity to give all the aid he could. In the course of about ten weeks Mr. Brightman was at liberty, and left Mr. Whimsey with no regret. He first came to Brookfield Hall, before he went to Sandover, to visit his dying Rector. O that I had time to narrate half the profitable conversation, (especially as far as Mr. Merryman could converse,) which passed between these good men! For it seems that Mr. Brightman ill knew how to express what an abundance of good was communicated to him thereby: and especially in seeing and conversing with such a man as Mr. Merryman, in his declining state; possessing such calmness and serenity, such a peaceful resignation to the holy

will of God, and withal, so blessed with such a lively sense of gratitude and praise to him, by whose almighty grace he was saved from a state, once so depraved, but from which he was now so mercifully and powerfully redeemed. So bright an evidence of the vital influence of the Gospel, he had never seen before : and he has since solemnly declared, that out of all the sermons he had ever read, and from all the sermons he had ever heard, he never derived so much profit and benefit to his mind.

Another very great advantage Mr. Brightman obtained as a minister, from this intercourse was, that it rendered him much more beneficial to the souls of men. From the natural strength of his mind, he was apt to be too discussional and metaphysical to be well understood by the generality of his hearers ; but he observed with surprise, how much more good had been done by Mr. Lovegood and Mr. Merryman, than by himself, by a much plainer, and consequently, more scriptural style of address : before, he was wise and cold, but now, he became wise and warm ; while what he delivered to the judgment, he applied to the heart with divine success.

Before the Dialogue begins, it should be noticed, that Mr. Merryman continued full three months at Brookfield Hall, before his disease terminated in his dissolution. By his own desire, his remains were taken to Sandover, to be buried in the Chancel of his own Church, requesting at the same time, that Mr. Lovegood would perform that last office, and improve his death, by a sermon to the congregation. His remains were accordingly taken on the Saturday after his death, to Sandover, when the interment took place, and on the next day, the Funeral Sermon was preached. It was therefore necessary that Mr. Brightman should serve for Mr. Lovegood, while he performed the painful task requested of him.

The day afterwards, Mr. Lovegood returned. Having first visited his own family at the Vicarage, he next went to the Hall, to communicate what had

passed. No wonder that the disconsolate widow, had not sufficient strength and spirits, to hear the narration of these events. After she had retired out of the room with her Mother, the following conversation thus commenced between the before-mentioned gentlemen with Mr. Sprightly, who in consequence of the death of Mr. Merryman, came to transact some business at Brookfield Hall.

Wor. O Sir! I almost tremble to ask what you must have felt in performing the last offices for my dear departed Son-in-law.

Loveg. In all my life time, I was never more affected and overcome.

Bri. I should suppose so, for since my short residence at Sandover, I have discovered that there never was a man more beloved, or more deserving of it; for ever since it has pleased God to change his heart, what a character he has sustained! He was the father of every dejected widow, and the parent of every orphan child. The pains and care he took in the instruction of the children of the poor, especially in a religious point of view, was beyond all praise; even while he reprov'd them, he constrained them to love him, forgiving them tenderly, rewarding them freely, provided they would do better for the time to come. There was not a cause of distress that he would not with the greatest assiduity seek out and relieve. In short, a spirit of universal humanity seemed to occupy all the feelings of his heart. And as a minister, I hope I have been taught of him, what I never shall forget. It seemed almost impossible for any person to be more devoted to the salvation and good of souls. His conduct was one perpetual sermon: even the very enemies of religion, who hated him as a prophet, are ready to garnish his sepulchre now he is gone.

Loveg. No wonder that a man like this was so

honoured, when he was taken to the grave. The hearse was met by crowds, full two miles out of town, all dressed in mourning, singing as far as they could sing, solemn and penitential hymns, for having forfeited by their unprofitableness, so truly good a man ; and when the corpse arrived at the Church, O what a scene !

Wor. I suppose the Church was much crowded at the funeral.

Loveg. Beyond all description. And when I began reading those solemn sentences appointed for the funeral service, every eye seemed floating in tears, and many wept aloud : indeed my own feelings were so overcome, that I could scarcely utter one word after another ; and the people seeing me so much affected, were the more affected still.

Wor. I can easily imagine what your feelings must have been, for I know how you loved him.

Loveg. Yes Sir, I did love him, and who could help it ; the sight of him, the very mention of his name, at all times did me good. He lived for the best of purposes ; and the surprising change that the grace of God had accomplished upon his heart, has surprised thousands, and dethroned prejudice astonishingly.

Wor. But how did you get through the service ?

Loveg. Indeed Sir, I could not get through the service : and the children who were appointed to sing a funeral hymn, as he was carried from before the reading desk to his grave in the Chancel, could not finish their office before they were so overcome, that many of them actually wept aloud, and I was so overpowered by the sight, that I could not speak, nor read another word ; and when I requested Mr. Slapdash, who was one of the pall bearers, to finish the service, dear old man, he seemed to be more affected than myself, so that the lot fell upon Dr. Orderly, (who attended as another of the pall bearers,) to finish the service ; and he also found it a difficult task.

DIALOGUE XLI.



THE FUNERAL OF MR. MERRYMAN.

[Mr. Sprightly then adds.] And it was in attempting to sing the last stanza, that all were so affected that they could not sing any more.

Wor. But I hope Sir, you will give us the rest of your hymn.

Loveg. Sir, there were but two stanzas more, and I cannot recollect them.

Wor. Well Sir, I hope you will let us see the whole of your hymn on another day. But how did you get through the funeral sermon on the Sunday?

Loveg. O Sir! the Church yard was crowded an hour before the Church doors were opened; and I was actually obliged to get in at the window, behind the pulpit and reading desk, to perform my office, while I was under the necessity of hiring Mr. Anything, to read the prayers, as I found preaching the sermon would be quite enough for me.

Wor. What was your subject?

Loveg. "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men*." And when I had to give the outlines of his character, as a truly godly man, I was frequently interrupted at the consideration, that so many excellencies were completely lost to us, while the body which possessed them, was buried out of our sight; and while the remembrance of them, was all that was left for us to improve, that we might follow him, as he followed Christ; and that it was an awful judgment, when such godly men were taken from us, as a deprivation of the greatest blessing we could enjoy.

Wor. Did you say much concerning the astonishing change that had been wrought upon him?

Loveg. Being myself much concerned in that event, my remarks on that subject were rather general, than particular. All the Parish who had seen him in both states, had a much stronger exemplification of the power of divine grace on the human heart, than any words of mine could have illustrated. But my principal aim was, (as far as I could aim at any

thing, through the overflowings of my affection,) to excite the people to cry earnestly to the Lord, for his help, who alone could appear for them as a congregation, under such a loss ; and who had grace and power enough to create, and send forth a thousand like him; whenever he might choose.

Wor. I suppose you quoted much of what he said in his dying moments, as we generally receive all such expressions as being of the most solemn importance.

Bri. [To Mr. Lovegood.] As the duty at Brookfield prevented my being with him during the last days of his life, I should be thankful if you would tell me what those expressions were, especially such of them as you introduced into the funeral sermon.

Wor. I hope you mentioned the interview we had with him, about three days before his death ; when we had our apprehensions, that his dissolution was near at hand.

Bri. O Sir ! let me hear it.

Loveg. Why Sir, after uttering many delightful things, though almost breathless, and ready to faint away into the arms of death, I cannot express with what rapture he uttered the following lines !

The goodly land I see,
With peace and plenty blest,
The land of sacred liberty and endless rest :
There milk and honey flow,
There oil and wine abound,
And trees of life for ever grow
With mercy crown'd.

There dwells the Lord our King,
The Lord our righteousness :
Triumphant o'er the world and sin,
The Prince of Peace.
On Sion's sacred heights,
His kingdom still maintains ;
And glorious with his saints in light
For ever reigns.

While he thus lay panting for breath, he paused for

a while, and then apparently in a greater rapture still, he further added,

He by himself hath sworn,
I on his oath depend,
I shall on eagles' wings upborne
To heav'n ascend ;
I shall behold his face ;
I shall his power adore ;
And sing the wonders of his grace
For evermore.

Bri. What blessed lines to hang upon the lips of a dying man, just entering into glory. Did you tell the congregation any thing further of what he said ?

Loveg. After he had quoted the hymn I mentioned, he was seized with a violent fit of coughing, which produced a considerable degree of expectoration, and he seeing the discharge tinged with blood, repeated these lines,

He shed a thousand drops for me ;
A thousand drops of richer blood :
Here's love and grief beyond degree,
The Lord of glory dies for man :
But lo ! what sudden joys we see,
Jesus the dead revives again.

Blessed be God " he is my resurrection and my life," and through him my soul has been quickened, which was dead in trespasses and sins, and through his grace, I can trust him with my dying body also. " This corruption, shall soon put on an incorruption ; and this mortal, shall soon put on immortality ; and then shall be brought to pass, the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory." He could not repeat any more of that delightful passage ; but next added ; Blessed be God, death is nothing to me : but O my dear wife and child, and flock ! what will they do ? He dropt a tear, and added, Well, well, I must leave them all with him who is the Father of the fatherless, and the widow's friend. And when I again told the people of this, his holy anxiety for the sal-

vation of their souls, they were again as much affected as myself.

Wor. No wonder at it, every day he seemed to be increasing in usefulness among the people.

Spri. But dear Sir, you have not mentioned that after that fit of coughing, he fell into a doze, and what he said when he awoke out of it. That seemed to affect the people more than any thing you said before.

Loveg. Such a heaven in any man's countenance, while he was taking his rest, I think I never beheld before, and in his doze the nurse came in, and that awoke him. He cried, "O! who has pull'd me down? why did you pull me down? I thought I was just entering into the presence Chamber of my Lord; and that I was full of singing; while there were thousands of singing spirits with me, and O how delightful the music was! while we all sang "unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." I found the repetition of this was quite enough for us all, on this subject I could say no more, while it was too much for the people to hear any more. Here I was obliged to pause, till I had sufficient spirits to tell the congregation, what were the last words he uttered, while I was standing around his bed on the Sunday evening in which he died. "I feel I am going, All is well. By faith, I can say as Stephen said, "Behold, I see the heavens open, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." "I shall there see as I am seen, and know as I am known, and shall be for ever with the Lord." After this, you know we did not stand by him more than five minutes, before he turned up his eyes, and without a sigh, or a groan, breathed his last.

Bri. And after all, what a short sample was given of the gracious things that dropt from his lips at different times! I trust I never shall forget, with what earnestness he pressed me, whenever I could come to visit him, to urge upon the people at Sandover, no-

thing but the divine realities of religion, by illustrating the glories of that faith, which regenerates the heart, and directs us to live alone to the glory of God.

Loveg. But it appeared to me, that nothing could so completely display the excellency of his mind, beyond what passed between him and his poor careless Father, when he came to visit him in this house, about three weeks before his death. Though he was much agitated at the thoughts of seeing him, yet his wise and affectionate, though respectful regard to a parent, while he addressed him with the greatest faithfulness, brought many a tear from the old man's eyes.

Bri. Were you with them all the time ?

Loveg. Yes, I and Mr. Worthy were both with them. I remember when he first saw his son, till of late a fine personable young man, but now so reduced ; the tears began starting from his eyes, while he said to him, O my Son ! I am sorry your religious zeal was not more tempered with prudence, and then you might not have caught that dreadful fever, which has brought you to this present state : especially when you had such pleasing prospects of life before you. His reply was, Yes, dear Sir, but I was in the way of duty,—duty called, and I obeyed ; and that is my consolation. There was a time when I might have caught my death, as many others have, in dissipation and riot ; what a mercy it is, that I am not now a martyr to my own folly, and sinful delights ! you know dear Sir, what I once was, even some time after I was in orders ; till God was pleased to change my heart ;—I blush for shame, to think of it.—I was glad to hear the old man reply, I am sorry, though I fear you have been running into another extreme, that I did not set you a better example, then dropping a tear, said, My child, I hope you'll forgive me. Mr. Merryman was now quite as much overcome as his father, and cried, My dear Father, I have prayed for your forgiveness a thousand times : and if you will allow me to be so bold to express my feelings as

a dying man, I perpetually pray that God in mercy, would look upon you, and my dear mother and sisters, and change your hearts. The weeping parent immediately added, If you can pray for me, I must confess, that as yet, I never pray'd for myself.

Bri. This must have been enough to upset you all.

Loveg. Indeed Sir it was, and I took the opportunity to enforce the nature and necessity of a divine change, so strongly exemplified in the conduct of his dying Son. And after this, I remember a hard fit of coughing, for a while interrupted the conversation; when Mr. Merryman again thus addressed his Father. "Father, this cannot last long, I know I am soon to die; but still you need not grieve over me; for at times I feel more happiness and joy, than words can express; adding, I have "a hope full of immortality," believing in Christ, who has changed my heart, and pardoned all my sins, I can "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." The fixed attention of the father, enabled the son to proceed, by assuring him that there is a divine reality in religion, which with his dying lips, he humbly entreated him seriously to consider, as the greatest blessing God can give, or the soul of man can possibly enjoy; and as the only cordial that can support the soul, when sinking into the arms of death; begging with many tears that he would recommend the same to his dear Mother and Sisters, while he made it his last request to them, to seek for the salvation of their souls.

Bri. The Father must have been considerably affected by such an exhortation.

Loveg. Very much indeed. But what he next added was still more so. It is impossible to tell how he uttered his grief respecting his disconsolate flock, which he was about to leave, and how he entreated his Father, that if possible, he would prevail with his Brother, not to give the living away to a man who was as bad as he himself once was, before he was better taught. That he had heard that a Mr. Tugwell, was already designed as his successor; and that the

consequence would be most distressing. That though he was now surprised how the few people who attended the Church before he knew better, could be so ignorant as to come there, when his example was so bad, and his conversation was so light and frothy, but that now, it was quite otherwise; for that if another Minister should come of the same stamp as he once was, they would leave the Church directly and provide for themselves another place of worship, that they might have a Minister of their own choosing, who would hold forth to them the word of life, and tutor them in the fear of God.

Wor. And how we were all affected when he added, "Though I have reason to bless the kind providence of God, that has led me into this family, whereby the best of wives has been put into my bosom, and addressing himself to me, while no son of your own, dear Sir, could have been treated with more affection than that, which as an adopted son, I have ever received from you, yet this my dear wife I can with submission render back again into her parent's hands; while I am satisfied, that our dear little infant, after my departure, will ever be considered as one of your own, concerning all these earthly sacrifices, I think I can say, "thy will be done." But O my dear flock! I love them as my own soul, I cannot express how "I yearn over them all, in the bowels of Jesus Christ;" and how I am pain'd at the thought, that they should be given over to one, who has no spiritual concern for their eternal good!

Loveg. I was glad to see his father so much affected at his son's entreaties, which drew from him the strongest promises, and engagements, that if he could not prevail with his uncle to refuse the living to his friend and distant relation Mr. Tugwell; yet as he had other preferments, he would try if it could be so contrived, that a Curate might be settled among them, who would be a future blessing to the disconsolate congregation.

Spri. Yes Sir, and I can tell you something further,

One of the last offices I ever performed for our dear departed friend was, to write a letter to his uncle for him, (he being too weak to do any thing but sign it,) urging the same request in the most affectionate terms. Dear man, how he wept and prayed all the time I wrote it, and since then, several of us in the Town have drawn up a respectful petition, respecting the same, mentioning you Sir, [To Mr. Brigman] as the object of our choice, and that we shall not regard any extra expence, provided we can but see you comfortably settled among us.

Bri. Can there be a probability of that sort? There is not a man more careless and unconcerned about religious matters than he is said to be. I have been turned out of two curacies already, and I shall soon be dismissed from the third; perhaps for decency sake, I may be permitted to stop a Sunday or two, and then be discharged.

Loveg. Ah Sir! you have but the common lot of all faithful Curates, who have ungodly Rectors, but from the carelessness and indifference of old Mr. Merryman, and his pot companion Mr. Tugwell; I draw a contrary conclusion; they will not care who serves the church, provided they can be left at their ease, and Mr. Tugwell can enjoy the tythes.

Wor. And he sha'nt mind paying his Curate for him, provided he will keep at a distance.

Bri. But wo'nt Squire Madcap do all he can to prevent it?

Spri. He is so wicked, wild, and foolish, that no one minds him. There is therefore very little harm to be dreaded from that quarter. But if he, or any one else of the same stamp should be sent among us, we must provide for ourselves.

Wor. I shall help you immediately to see to that, by beginning with a donation of five hundred pounds, and shall give an annual subscription towards the support of the place, as soon as it is established, and there is no law against reading the liturgy of the established Church, which we will all admire.

Spri. O Sir! a thousand thanks for your encouraging offer. I hope we shall all be eager to lend an helping hand, surely the many prayers our dear departed minister offered up, that the Gospel might be continued among us, will somehow be answered for our good.

Loveg. I am sorry I shall be debarred from taking an active part in this work, if the gospel is to be turned out of the Church. But I really have no patience with the absurdity of those, who tell us, we should be contented without the gospel in the pulpit, as we are sure to have it in the reading desk, while the grand efficient means, which God is pleased to bless, is the preaching of the word. Something therefore must be done, and the Lord give wisdom and zeal that it may be properly, and wisely done.

Just then the disconsolate widow and Mrs. Worthy re-entered the room, this naturally gave another turn to the conversation, but in a few days the reader may expect a joyful termination of this melancholy event.

DIALOGUE XLII.

THE HAPPY TERMINATION OF THE MELANCHOLY EVENT OF
THE DEATH OF MR. MERRYMAN.

BETWEEN MR. LOVEGOOD, MR. BRIGHTMAN, MR. SPRIGHTLY,
AND THE FAMILY OF BROOKFIELD HALL.

MR. Brightman and Mr. Sprightly having come over to Brookfield, principally to assist in the settlement of Mrs. Merryman's affairs, were under the necessity of continuing at Brookfield Hall, till near the conclusion of the week.

While the family were assembled at the tea-table on the Thursday evening following, a purpose messenger came from Sandover, with a letter directed to the Rev. John Brightman. The letter being put into his hands, he read it.—Immediately the agitation of his mind became so very considerable, that it even fetched a tear of surprise from his eyes: inso-much that Mr. Lovegood asked the question :

Loveg. Dear Sir, what is the matter? I hope there is no bad news from Sandover.

Bri. O no Sir! but the contents of the letter have quite overcome me. Contrary to all my expectations I am actually appointed Curate of Sandover.

Wor. You don't say so!

Bri. Yes Sir, I am. The letter is from Mr. Tugwell himself. He tells me the presentation was sent to him yesterday: the patron at the same time requesting that I might be nominated to the curacy, by the dying request of his nephew, and especially as

he found it was almost the universal wish of the Parishioners that he should acquiesce.

Mrs. Wor. O how rejoiced our dear Son-in-law would have been, if he could but have known of this event.

Bri. Perhaps he might dear madam, but I find by the letter I shall be wanted at Sandover almost directly; for my new Rector, as I must now call him, means to go over to the Bishop for induction, early in the next week; and begs I would attend with him, that I may be licensed to the curacy at the same time.

Wor. Well, Sir, we shall be very happy to part with you upon that score. But your new Rector seems to be in a great hurry in the transaction of this affair.

Bri. O Sir! he explains himself further in his letter, That as there is a strong propensity in his constitution to gout, he means still to reside at his other living, though a small one, as it is full fifty miles nearer Bath, than Sandover is, and that his patron means to take him to that city as speedily as possible, before the winter sets in; and therefore he wants me to attend upon that duty almost immediately.

Loveg. O what delightful tidings this will be to the poor disconsolate people at Sandover! they will be as much overcome with joy, as they have been with grief.

Bri. Yes, and my Rector writes with so much good nature about the matter; he seems to be as well pleased with our plan, as we can be with his; for he tells me as he has some incumbrances that his patron wishes him to discharge, (probably a sum of money that he might have borrowed from him,) he is sorry he can advance me no more than sixty pounds a year, and the surplice fees, which he hopes may do while I continue a single man.

Wor. We shan't mind what he allows you, provided he will allow you the uninterrupted use of the Church, that you may do all the good you can in it.

Spri. (to Mr. Brightman.) I am sure dear Sir, the people of Sandover, who loved Mr. Merryman and his ministry, will never suffer you to want : nor can we allow the kind liberality of Mr. Worthy, to be imposed upon, to keep our Minister for us, while we alone are interested in the benefit.

Wor. Yes, but a minister, if he be a good one, (no matter for the bad ones,) should not merely have enough to keep him from starving upon such a miserable pittance as sixty pounds a year. He should have something in his pocket to give to the poor : if my purse is not wanted in one way, it will in another.

Spri. As he means to be a non-resident, I suppose he designs to let you live in the Rectory house.

Bri. It would be strange living in that house on such an income ; though I bless God, I have besides a little of my own, arising from my college fellowship, so long as I continue a Bachelor.* But as to the Rectory house, he tells me he means to let it : and he is 'in hopes that the rent of the house, will answer to the payment of the salary, as he hears it is a good one. [To Mrs. Merryman,] But he says he has no design to hurry you, dear Madam, out of the house, till it is perfectly convenient to yourself.

Mrs. Mer. Ah me ! Mr. Tugwell will meet with very little interruption from me, on that score. As soon as ever the effects can be disposed of, I shall be happy to have my mind relieved from such reflections as too frequently occur, under such a loss. Were I ever to enter into the doors of that house again, it would revive feelings, too painful to be sustained.

(Mrs. Merryman's eyes are embossed with tears. She retires out of the room, Mrs. Worthy follows her.)

Mr. Wor. Alas my poor daughter ! I know not when she will recover this heavy stroke. I should have supposed that if any thing would have revived

* I must not tell what college Mr. Brightman came from, or at which of the universities he was educated.

her sprints, the news of your appointment to the curacy, would at least have created one cheerful look.

Bri. O Sir! the loss is irreparable: I cannot wonder at all she feels. But the appointment to be the successor to such a man, makes me tremble.

Loveg. Yes Sir, and if we all trembled more at the vast importance of the work in which we are engaged, it would be just so much the better for our hearers.

Bri. Sir, it seems impossible for me, if I imitate, that I can ever equal that lively and lovely zeal, he adopted in all he did. Though I trust I shall aim at doing my best, yet what a comparative distance will be felt between him and me! My style of preaching, I now find, has been too discussional, cold, and phlegmatic. His was always animated, affectionate, and warm. My preaching hitherto, though I trust consistent with divine truth, has been like the light of the moon, clear, yet cold. His, like that of the sun, at times brilliant, and even if intervening clouds intercepted its brighter rays, yet still the warmth was felt, and its fertilising effects were evident.

Loveg. But dear Sir, you do not want either erudition or mind. The improvement of these Mr. Merryman sadly neglected in his thoughtless days; but afterwards the change in every point of view, was to the astonishment of all. Let your superior human acquirements then, be put upon the altar of a warm and affectionate heart, fully devoted to God; and then if the people do not forget Mr. Merryman, yet they will soon find that he is no longer wanted as a minister, if God should teach and animate a Brightman, as he taught him.

Bri. Ah Sir! what are all human abilities and acquirements, when compared to such spirituality and devotedness to God, as he possessed!

Loveg. I am glad you think so. Though all other qualifications without holy zeal to set them at work for the promotion of the glory of God, can be of no avail; still it is acknowledged, that wisdom

and spiritual understanding, are at all times necessary to guide this useful machine aright.

Bri. Ah Sir ! there was my mistake. I have been treating religion more like a dry, speculative science, than as a divine reality between God and the soul : while the strange enthusiastic reveries of Mr. Whimsy and his friends, might have driven me further into the contrary extreme, if the Lord, in his kind providence, had not directed me into these parts.

Loveg. Well Sir, the scriptural style of preaching, we shall always find to be the best ; for none of the first Apostles had the ability to dress their preaching in the forced, and false style of human eloquence : and when the Apostle Paul was sent forth “ as one born out of due time,” we know what he says of his own style of preaching : “ And I brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech and of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified ; and I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling ; and my speech and my preaching was not with the enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.” (And that for this astonishingly wise reason ;) “ lest your faith should stand in the wisdom of man, and not in the power of God.”

Spri. What an astonishing sermon Mr. Merryman preached from the last clause of those words, about a month before he was taken ill.

Loveg. I dare say he did. “ The demonstration of the spirit and power of God upon the soul,” was the grand subject that seemed at all times to occupy his mind, and warm his heart.

Spri. Yes, and almost every sermon he preached, he was sure to bring to bear upon that essential point, and at all times with so much tender and affectionate zeal for our eternal good. No wonder his ministry was such a blessing among us—And that dear man, we are now to hear no more for ever !

Loveg. [To Mr. Sprightly.] But have you not great reason to hope, to see a resurrection of him in the person of Mr. Brightman!

Bri. Alas Sir! how faint a resemblance of what he was, I fear will be found in me! As for the sacrifice of my character as it may respect any literary acquirements, that I can easily make. I know it will be my duty to speak, or rather converse from the pulpit, in such a plain, and easy style, as every unlettered person may understand; yet to get into the spirit and life of such a style of preaching, as rendered Mr. Merryman so useful as a Minister, though I shall aim at it, yet I fear a material difference will still be felt.

Wor. Why Mr. Lovegood has been as much for reading and thinking as yourself, yet he knows how to leave it all aside, when he gets into the pulpit. There he can dress his good sense, and scriptural divinity in such a plain, but powerful language, as not only charms a few of us who may have been favoured with education, but preaches equally to the delight and edification of all the poor peasants, who are charmed with sermons they can so easily comprehend.

Loveg. Dear Sir, if I am to be the subject of conversation, do let us waive it for the present, that we may settle with Mr. Brightman concerning his return to Sandover.

Bri. I wish if I could, to go off early to-morrow morning.

Spri. Sir, if you do, it will be impossible for me to attend you, for you know the broker that was to have attended this day with the appraisement of Mrs. Merryman's goods, is not to come till to-morrow morning, and we shall have enough to do, to determine what is to be sold, and what is to be kept; so that we shall not be able to return till the Saturday afternoon.

Just then Mr. Considerate came in, on behalf of a poor man who laboured in Rector Dolittle's garden.

His crime was, that he occasionally stole away to Brookfield Church on a Sunday; so that the poor man, his wife, and family, must have been sent to the Parish, had not the benevolent Mr. Worthy given him employ. But it seems the Rector had become more furious than ever, having lately taken up the old Popish doctrine of Baptismal regeneration, with a considerable degree of High-Church zeal.

It was late on the Saturday evening before Mr. Sprightly and Mr. Brightman could return to Sandover. The deserted Rectory being now no longer a proper abode for Mr. Brightman, he took up his residence at Mr. Sprightly's habitation, so that he was scarcely known to be in the Town till he was seen walking to the Church on the Sunday morning. Though it was universally known that a petition had been sent to the Patron on behalf of Mr. Brightman, yet little or nothing of what had passed between Mr. Tagwell and Mr. Brightman could have transpired. As far as rumor prevailed, it seems it was of an unfavourable nature. Many knowing the character of Mr. Merryman's uncle, concluded it was scarcely possible to expect any favourable report from such a quarter; while another report more generally prevailed, that sunk their spirits exceedingly: viz. That Mr. Madcap had actually succeeded with Mr. Merryman, to give his nephew's living away to a wild and rakish brother of his, who unfortunately was put into *holy orders*; and that immediately after his return from Newmarket races, he was to be inducted into the living: upon which all the people were determined to run away from the Church, as fast as ever they formerly collected together to fill it. But this it seems was only a wanton report, though as matters go, a very probable one, which was raised by one, who wished to make the cause of the people's grief, the subject of his sportive mirth.

In short, the agitation of the minds of all, was not to be expressed: no wonder that one and another of the congregation, pressed in upon Mr. Brightman

as he was advancing towards the Church, with their anxious queries. "Sir, I fear it will be one of the last Sundays we shall see you, or any one like you in our Church." Another added, Where must we all go when young Parson Madcap is sent among us. A third cried, O Sir! for the Lord's sake, if you are turned out of the Church, don't leave us. As you loved Mr. Merryman, so love us his poor disconsolate flock. We'll build a place for you, we'll do every thing we can to support you, and make you happy, if you will but feed us with the word of life as Mr. Merryman did. Being much overcome, to this he could but just add, Don't be downcast, all is well, the Lord will be better to you, than all your fears. Even this hint, soon created a general rumour among the people, which gave a gleam of hope to some, while sad desponding fears among others, more generally prevailed.

Thus he entered the Church, and attempted to begin the service, but seeing the pulpit and reading desk hung in black, and all the congregation dressed in mourning, together with the sad and sorrowful looks of such a numerous assembly; he had enough to do with the feelings of his mind, before he could begin the service. But when he was reading the psalms for the day, which happened to be very appropriate, it being the twenty seventh day of the month, his countenance began to brighten remarkably, and the emphasis with which he read different passages, surprised the people not a little; for thus he began: "When I was in trouble, I called upon the Lord, and he heard me." Then again, when those verses were read out of the 122d psalm: "O pray for the peace of Jerusalem! they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces; for my brethren and companions' sakes, I will wish thee prosperity," the very looks of Mr. Brightman almost indicated the suitability of the words, as being an applicable prayer for the restored mercy they were still to enjoy. But when Mr. Brightman continued reading the first of the psalms

appointed for the evening service, whether through absence or design I cannot say, yet from the pleasant emotions that appeared to possess his mind; at once all the congregation seemed to feel themselves elevated with a hope, that they might yet sing as Sion did, when these appropriate words were read, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, then were we like to them that dream; then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with joy. Then said they among the Heathen, the Lord has done great things for them, Yea, the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoice."

The hopes of the people thus greatly revived, were soon afterwards completely conformed, by the giving out of an appropriate hymn, before Mr. Brightman began his first sermon, as Curate of the Parish. This hymn, together with another designed for the conclusion of the service; unknown to Mr. Brightman, was put into Mr. Sprightly's care that it might be handed to the clerk. Though Mr. Lovegood was a better man, than he was a poet; still I conceive it will be a gratification to the reader, if a copy of these hymns, be given as each comes in its place. The clerk being rather of the countrified sort, thus gave it out.

"Let us sing to the praise and glory of God, a thanksgiving hymn, for sending Mr. Brightman, to be the Minister of this parish, in the room of Mr. Merryman deceased."

And how delighted and surprised the people were at the sound of a thanksgiving hymn, is not very easily to be expressed! Though the first part of the hymn they could scarcely sing for grief, yet the latter part of it they all could sing in a more cheerful key.

Submissive at thy throne O God,
We own the justice of thy rod;
'Tis thine to send thy judgments down,
'Tis ours to say thy will be done.

Vanish'd from our enraptur'd sight,
Late shone a star divinely bright;
Guiding our footsteps o'er the road,
That leads to happiness and God.

Ten thousand stars at thy command,
 Shall shine upheld in thy right hand :
 Thy sov'reign pow'r creates the ray.
 That turns our darkness into day.

Display this gracious pow'r divine :
 Bid Lord a brighter light still shine :
 And make thy servant now proclaim,
 With light and life the Savior's name.

With thankful hearts we bless the Lord.
 Who with his wonted grace hath heard
 His humble suppliants tell their grief,
 And send them down such quick relief.

Baptize thy servant from above,
 With that celestial flame of love,
 Then ev'ry heart shall feel thy pow'r,
 And ev'ry tongue thy grace adore.

O may this glorious grace be giv'n,
 That leads to holiness and heav'n :
 Then tribes of new-born souls shall sing,
 The glories of our conqu'ring King.

Though the hymn at once created a universal ecstasy of joy ; yet, O what the people further felt when Mr. Brightman, in a most appropriate prayer before the sermon, addressed the Majesty of Heaven, that he would bless him with all those needed graces of his most holy Spirit : so as that he might accomplish the charge an unexpected Providencé had involved upon him. That the love of God would fill him with a love to those souls, which were now become the objects of his peculiar attention and care ; and that such zeal as he had never felt before, might animate him to peculiar exertions for their eternal good. Nor were the people less struck at the appropriate text he chose on this occasion, " I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." The whole of that passage having been made the subject of recent conversation between him and Mr. Lovegood, with the greatest solemnity he informed the people, that it was his full determination, not to address them " with the enticing words of man's wisdom : but that with simplicity, and godly sincerity,"

it was his entire aim, to have his conversation among them, and to dedicate himself to their good with his whole heart, and with his whole soul. To this he added, that as he was sure he was sent in answer to their many prayers; and especially to the prayers and exertions of their late Minister, so he requested he might have an interest in their fervent prayers, that he might be upheld in the sacred work; especially as he felt himself so unequal to fill the station of one, who was so eminently useful, and so highly devoted to God. In short, it appeared among them all, as though Mr. Merryman was actually risen from the grave. So that it would be difficult to determine whether the excessive grief the people were called to sustain on the previous Sunday, while they were paying their last token of respect to the memory of Mr. Merryman: or the ecstasy of joy, occasioned by this unexpected event, had the more powerful effect on the people's minds.

At the conclusion of the sermon, Mr. Sprightly himself, was seen in the singing gallery, and heard giving out the following hymn; which was sung with astonishing ecstasy and delight.

Commission'd from the Lord of hosts,
 Servant of God arise and shine;
 Arise and gird thine armor on,
 And prove the strength of Jesus thine.

Go dare the dreadful powers of sin;
 From conqu'ring and from conquer go:
 Strike with the Spirit's mighty sword,
 And bring the vanquish'd monster low.

Strong in the strength of God alone,
 Let Satan the first sinner feel,
 The energy of truth divine,
 The vengeance of thy holy zeal.

As darkness flies before the sun,
 And seeks a region where to dwell,
 Remote from earth in worlds unknown,
 Hard by the dismal gloom of Hell.

So learn to make delusion fly,
 And with the beams of Gospel light

Chase down the lofty pride of man
Down to the shades of endless night.

Nor let thy fears presume to quell
The flame that kindles on thy heart,
Strength more than equal to thy day,
The great Jehovah shall impart.

In weakness shall thy strength be found,
While unbelief shall shrink away,
As sinners burst the bands of death,
And rise to bless the Gospel day.

Thus may thy faithful servant prove
The Champion of the Lord most high,
Thus urge the ling'ring combat on,
The battle win, and gain the sky.

After the service was over, I will leave the reader to conjecture the joyful salutations from every quarter, that crowded in upon Mr. Brightman, when Mr. Sprightly and he returned together from the Church; blessing and praising God, for such an unexpected mercy, after such a calamitous event. The unhappy gloom which sat upon every countenance, seemed to be banished, they now perceived that while the voice of prayer, most fervently offered up from house to house for the preservation of the invaluable life of Mr. Merryman, was not to be answered, yet that the Lord had in reserve for them, the continuation of the same mercy, though through another channel. They could now bless God, that while they had been benefitted by the bright example which had been set before them, in the life and death of Mr. Merryman, the light of divine truth was still vouchsafed for their future good. Long live Mr. Tugwell, if the uninterrupted blessing of such a Minister is to be continued to the people of Sandover thereby, and O that every mitred head, might feel the wisdom of filling our British Sion, with such Ministers as are thus "made wise to win souls to Christ;" allowing them at the same time a little more elbow-room, that they may exert their wisdom and zeal a little more extendedly, in their delightful work.

DIALOUGE XLIII.

BETWEEN MR. BRIGHTMAN, MR. WHIMSEY, MR. SLAPDASH,
AND MR. SPRIGHTLY.

ENTHUSIASM DETECTED.

THE settlement of Mr. Brightman among the inhabitants of Sandover, had now fully taken place. He became an inmate at Mr. Sprightly's where he had his board and lodging, and where he could at the same time, hear much of the pleasing and profitable conduct of the late Mr. Merryman, to which he was inquisitively attentive; being fully determined, for the good of the people, to follow him, as he followed Christ.

It seems however that, very soon afterwards, he met with a little interruption, by an unexpected visit from his late Rector Mr. Whimsey, who called upon him, on his return home from a Town of considerable magnitude in the north, where, as he expressed himself, *a great work of God* had been carrying on, though many of them, since then, had *fallen from grace*. I question if Mr. Brightman would have accepted this offer, though he could scarcely have done otherwise, out of civility but for the following circumstances.

He expected a visit, just at the same time, from good old Mr. Slapdash; whose constitutional warmth, was still regulated by a sound judgment, and excellent disposition; and who perhaps was better calculated for such a controversy, as next took place, than the more thoughtful, and judicious Mr. Lovegood.

Mr. Whimsey accordingly arrived, and visited Mr. Brightman at his lodgings. Both Mr. Brightman, and Mr. Slapdash were just then paying some visits about the Town. Mr. Sprightly therefore sent a note after them, informing them, that a Gentleman had arrived at his house, who appeared to him to be half crazy; and wanted to see Mr. Brightman directly. They accordingly returned, and the conversation after a short introduction, thus commenced.

Whim. O Sir! finding that Sandover was not much out of my way, I thought I would call on my return, and tell you what a glorious work is carrying on in the north; for I perceived, when you were my Curate, that you were but a *babe in knowledge*.

Bri. Sir, I love to hear of good news, if it be really good.

Whim. Good Sir! what can be better? at one of the public prayer-meetings, there were eleven convinced of sin, eight *set at liberty*; and three were *made perfect*; and are now as free from sin as they will be in Heaven.

Slapd. What state was the moon in when all this happened?

Whim. O Sir, it was near the full: for I remember it was very light, when we went home, and we did not break up till near twelve: "the Lord was so much among us."

Slapd. I thought it must have been about that time; for some sort of people are always worse about the full, and change of the moon.

Whim. Why, I hope Sir you don't call all this *great work of God*, madness; as the heathen Festus thought St. Paul was mad, when he told his experience.

Bri. No Sir, I hope we shall never conceive that which deserves to be called a great work of God, to be the effect of madness, for that brings disorderly sinners to the possession of their sober senses, that

they may serve God with "all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

Whim. Why Sir, it is wonderful how powerfully these people were convinced of sin, *as in a moment*, so that their screams and cries for mercy, were heard all the Chapel over. And don't we read how "the Spirit convinces the world of sin; and when three thousand people were pricked to the heart, how they all cried, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved!"

Bri. Does it in the least appear, that they, one and all, cried out at the same time, so as to interrupt the Apostle in his preaching? Is it not rather evident, that they first heard Peter's sermon, with very serious attention, and then waited, though with eager surprise till a proper opportunity was given them to ask the important question, "what must we do?" or in other language, "how shall we escape from the wrath to come?" Or does it appear though the occasion was so extraordinary, while their convictions were so powerful and strong, that there were any of those hysterical ravings and screamings, that we have heard of in other places? With what calmness and deliberation the Apostle answers this solemn and important query: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And still addressing their reason, we are further told, how that "with many other words did he testify and exhort saying, save yourselves, or be ye saved,* from this untoward generation," concluding evidently, that they were all capable of receiving his instructions with rational and attentive minds.

And now Sir, allow me to ask, if there be any, even the most distant similarity between such meetings as

*Acts ii. 38, 39, 40, the original expression is passive:

you have lately attended, and the assembly recorded in the Acts, where so many souls in the full exercise of their understanding, were so effectually converted from sin to God?

Whim. Why to be sure : when Sally Jakes was *convinced of sin*, her screams were so loud, that they were heard quite out in the streets. And when John Anvil the blacksmith *received conviction*, for a while, two men could scarcely hold him ; but he has been a sad drunken sinner ; and no wonder that his convictions were so strong : and as for Susan Simple, though she was more quiet, yet when she was *convinced*, she was so overpowered, that it was some time before she was brought into her senses.

Slapl. Perhaps the blacksmith might have had a *drop too much*, just before he came into the chapel ; and as to the woman you speak of, I should really be apt to suspect the good that any persons are supposed to get, while they are *out of their senses*.

Whim. Why I have known persons converted in the midst of their sins ; and when persons are not altogether in their senses, why cannot God, even then, reach the heart?

Slapl. Sir, we are not about to limit the Holy One in his divine operations upon the hearts of men ; but still it becomes us to beware of those human mixtures, which may lay us open to a variety of deceptions, respecting the work itself. It was not above three Sundays ago, when a miserable, drunken fellow, came into my Church, and while there, in my address to sinners at the conclusion of the sermon, his convictions, for a while, almost overpowered his reason, and he cried out in such a manner, that the congregation was somewhat disturbed ; but this was an extreme of passion, which we attempted immediately to correct. And afterwards when I had an interview with the poor creature, I was happy to find there was nothing irrational, or improper in the account he gave of himself, but that such an overpowering sense of the evil of sin, was just then, more than he could sustain.

Spri. When our late dear Minister preached his last sermon among us, and fainted away in the pulpit, and was carried out of the Church like a corpse; while many of us apprehended that immediate dissolution might have been the result; no wonder that such overpowering effects were produced upon the congregation, that some were thrown into strong hysterics, whose constitutional feelings were too weak to bear the shock. There was a rational cause for all our sorrows, and we could not help ourselves, nor resist their excessive effects.

Bri. Nor shall I ever forget, though I was then but ten years of age, the pangs of grief my dear mother was thrown into, when my Father, struck with apoplexy, was brought home, all but breathless, and covered with blood, the temple artery having been cut, to preserve his life, if possible. No wonder at her ecstasies, while she had four children, and one an infant at her breast, and almost all her expectations cut off by this sudden stroke.

Slapd. And if the things of eternity are of infinitely greater importance, than those of time and sense, I apprehend we can never feel more than we should, on the discovery of our exceeding sinfulness before God.

Bri. As far as this goes, we shall all agree: for could we feel as much as we should, under a conviction of our sinfulness, it would be more than our human constitutions could sustain; and, especially, at the discovery of these evils in a more immediate, and unexpected manner. I have oftentimes thought, what a strong exemplification we have of this almighty power, respecting some whom St. Paul mentions, who belonged to the Corinthian Church, and who came into their assemblies, though unbelievers, "were convinced of all, and judged of all, and thus falling down on their faces, worshipped God, and reported that God was in them of a truth?"* the

* I Cor. xiv. 24, 25.

times were extraordinary, and the occasion was extraordinary; and no wonder at such extraordinary effects.

Whim. Well, and so it is in the present day, at times, in our meetings and chapels.

Bri. Then is there no reason to suspect a false imitation of such times and seasons? It shall however be most readily granted, that the same divine power is needed, in all ages of the Church, to lead the convinced sinner, to the knowledge of salvation. But I have before now observed to you Sir, that these sort of *instantaneous* impulses are at best, but very dubious evidences, if any evidences at all, of the reality of this divine power.

Whim. Why, is it not evident, that the three thousand you have mentioned, under Peter's sermon, knew not only the place, but the very *moment*, in which they were convinced of sin, and did not those also feel the same, who "fell down on their faces, and acknowledged that God was in them of a truth?"

Spri. Though I was increasingly struck at the excellent things I heard from the lips of our late dear Minister, yet I must confess, I know nothing of such an *impressive moment*, as Mr. Whimsey seems to insist upon.

Bri. Though it may not be necessary to inquire about the *moment* of a sinner's conversation; yet we are ready to admit the fact that there are thousands in the world, who can remember the time and place, in which Divine mercy was first manifested to their hearts. How many there are, who well recollect the first sermon they ever heard with a divine effect: or perhaps some other providential means, which might have brought about the same desirable end. And yet I think it is not an improbable conjecture, that many of those who heard Peter's first sermon, might formerly have been the hearers of John the Baptist, preaching repentance in the wilderness of Judea; and that some former convictions they then received, were afterwards, more strongly and powerfully revived.

Slapd. Nor need we deny that which the Scriptures have positively revealed, respecting the Apostle Paul, the Philippian jailor, and Zaccheus the publican, whose immediate conversions were accomplished by an immediate operation of a Divine power to each of their minds. And yet others, who were evidently made partakers of the same grace, were wrought upon in a very different manner. The timid Nicodemus, who through fear, could not venture to come to Jesus, but by night; was certainly seeking for something he felt he needed from him; otherwise he would have entirely kept away. Yet afterwards, when the light of divine truth had shone more powerfully upon his mind, he became more confident in his profession, and proved it by his more courageous zeal, when with Joseph of Arimathea, he evidently proved, he was not ashamed to own our crucified Lord, when he brought his costly spices at his funeral.

The same gradual increase was evidenced upon the mind of the pious Centurion, whose "prayers, and whose alms came up as a memorial before God, a long time before he heard from Peter, "*words whereby he should be saved*;" and probably a similar instance of divine grace, was manifested to Lydia also, who attended "where prayer was wont to be made," before she knew St. Paul; and whose heart the Lord afterwards more fully opened. And surely there can be no doubt but that such as were brought to accept the salvation of the Gospel, by a mere gradual change from darkness to light, are not less the children of the light and of the day, than others.

Whim. I must say, that in this I entirely differ from you both. I doubt not, but that all of them knew the very *moment* in which they were converted. I shall never forget the very spot on which I received the forgiveness of my sins. It was out in a thunder-storm. I thought "cannot God make the sun shine through that black cloud?" and, almost directly, the sun shone out as bright as ever I beheld it. And

then again, I thought cannot God in the same manner break into my soul, and forgive me all my sins? and immediately as if it had been a voice from Heaven, it came to me, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." And from that very moment, I had peace with God. And as to my wife, she received her pardon one night when she was asleep; for she heard the voice of an Angel, as plainly speak to her, as if she had been wide awake, "Daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee:" and this is the way she came by her pardon.

Bri. Now Sir, will you give a *poor babe* leave to say, when texts of scripture are brought home to people's minds in such a fanciful manner, in my opinion very delusive consequences may be the result. I first ask, by what authority do I take such passages, as though they were designed as an express revelation individually to me? If my recollection reminds me of them, does it not become me to examine whether I possess the same humble, penitent, believing frame of mind, as they possessed, to whom they were originally addressed? then the same blessing is certainly mine, as well as theirs. Nor does a strong, or fanciful recollection of them add in the least to the blessing contained in them. If otherwise, the stronger fancy operates, the stronger a lying delusion may operate upon my mind: for none but penitent believers will ever be pardoned, however a deluded fancy may deceive them. Not that I deny the superintendency of the Holy Spirit, to bring home different passages of scripture to the mind; but it is a duty we owe to ourselves, to consider them in all their own bearings, before we take the consolation of them to ourselves.

Whim. Well Sir, if you still think the Holy Spirit may bring texts of scripture to the mind, I hope I and my wife had them properly brought home to our minds. But surely you don't deny the power of prayer, and at that meeting I mentioned, it is wonderful how Sally Fancy received forgiveness, while

they were praying over her, that she might be set at liberty; telling the Lord, "he must do it, because they prayed in faith, and that if Christ did not do it directly, they would tell his Father of him;" and it was just then the light broke in upon her soul.

Bri. But Sir, is this the proper language for sinners to make use of before the eternal throne of God, when our minds should be filled with the deepest reverence and awe?

Whim. O Sir! they only use the same sort of language that the importunate Widow did before the unjust Judge.

Bri. But are we to conceive that such metaphors and allusions can produce a proper apology for such daring expressions? Can the importunate language of that Widow, before an unjust Judge, sanction a similar address before an infinitely just and holy God?

Whim. Perhaps some of the exhorters may go too far. But I am sure he pardoned them, or he would not have justified Sally Fancy, which immediately took place; so that she got up from her knees, and began singing with the preachers directly. And just then, another women received forgiveness, and began to sing with several others. But as it happened, they struck up in such different tunes, that it was impossible to find what was sung; and if it had not been for that and another circumstance, just at that time, there would have been singing all the Chapel over.

Slapd. I have a little curiosity to ask, what that other circumstance could have been?

Whim. Why two persons, who were told what marvellous doings were carrying on at the Chapel about that time, in hopes of being convinced of sin, just then came in, but for want of faith, in that instance, they could not obtain it; and yet one of them prayed so earnestly, that he was all in a sweat, and his eyes were ready to start out of his head; and one of these men felt so much, that it was as much as two

people could do, to hold him down, for he wanted to run away before he was convinced ; but the constables kept all as quiet as they could.*

Slapd. Really Sir, if I had been there, I should have thought myself in *Bedlam*.

Whim. *Bedlam* Sir ! why what could have been more glorious ! And while I was praying in one corner of the chapel, I had *such strong faith* given me for Jennet Meagrim, one of the class-leaders, that she instantly received *the second blessing* of christian perfection, and I am sure it was at that very moment I prayed in faith that it might be given her, and now she is *as free from sin, as she will be in heaven*.

Slapd. What, while she is still carrying about with her " a body of sin and death ! ! "

Bri. I confess, Mr. Whimsey, I never could understand your doctrine of perfection, and it appears to me such a sort of *imperfect perfection* after all, that a person will do better without it than with it ; for as to the milder remedial law, that some of you talk about, that if we do as well as we *can*, instead of doing as well as we *should*, that is all the law now requires ; if some of your friends are contented with such a loose law, I confess I am not.†

Slapd. It is to be hoped that every real Christian has a perfect, or an upright heart : but alas ! we have so much to contend with, from the remains of corruption that the best of us have need to cry, " God be merciful to me a sinner ! "

Whim. O Sir ! Jennet Meagrim said, she directly felt sin destroyed in her, *root and branch*, and that it went through her like a flash of lightning, and immediately she cried out for joy, " He is come ! he is come ! "

* It is too true, that the civil magistrate has been under the necessity of employing the peace officers, to guard against the evil consequences of these wild proceedings, so contrary to the decency and order the gospel inspires.

† See Dialogue XXVII.

Slapd. Pray Sir, don't you think a deal of all this is produced by violent and improper efforts, upon the animal passions, that is rather prejudicial, than beneficial to that real good, which God communicates to the heart?

Whim. Sir, what can be better, than to be perfectly freed from all sin?

Bri. May I ask, Sir, when I lived with you, was it an imagination or a reality, that made Mrs. Whimsy's maid fancy that she was perfect, when three days after, she fell into a violent passion with her mistress, because she thought proper to lock up the pepper and salt, and not to allow her to keep the key of the butter any longer?

Whim. O Sir, she lost it for a while, but she is trying to recover it again.

Bri. May I ask again Sir, how far you recollect the tricks which were played off, some years ago, by Dr. Demanaduke and others, when animal magnetism was in vogue? What strange and astonishing effects were produced thereby? and are not the efforts now making very similar, when people are so strongly urged to expect such unwarrantable impulses, which they are to conceive, as being *absolutely necessary* to the salvation of the soul?

Slapd. Yes, and these sort of devotions seem to be offered up much in the same style of the ancient *exorcists*, as though the Devil actually possessed the minds of some, who needed deliverance by such efforts of extraordinary imprecations, as at times, are very shocking and profane.

Whim. O Sir! I believe the Devil at times, and among some people, has great power over the human mind, and we always find the deliverance is granted, when the preachers are the most violent and earnest in prayer; for you know, "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," and just when I was most earnest, then it was, that Jennet Meagrim *received perfection*."

Bri. Surely Sir, as a beneficed Clergyman, you were not one of the actors, in this stage of enthusiasm.

Whim. O no Sir! My *prayer of faith*, was offered up quite privately, at one corner of the Chapel; and I know a good, faithful soul, who was a washer-woman, that said, she was sure to have fine weather to dry her linen, if she could but *pray in faith*.*

Slapd. I should hardly suppose, that the Lord would alter the course of the clouds, for the sake of gratifying an old woman, during her washing-week.

Whim. O Sir, if you don't believe it, I do. And I remember another good lady, who was a milliner at Bath; expecting that there might soon be a Court mourning, she in faith, made up a great number of mourning caps; and while her husband thought that she was doing wrong, fearing that much might be lost for want of customers; she went up stairs, and *laid the caps before the Lord in prayer*, and there was almost immediately a court mourning; which as it

* Much of this false confidence in prayer, seems to originate from a conceited excellency in our devotions, arising from the mere strength of our imaginations. But where a spirit of warm and wise devotion is given, for any particular blessing, may we not take it as a good indication, that it is the gracious design of God to answer such supplications? Certainly we may, for "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much;" but then we should have a scriptural warrant for what we ask, for instance. There is a wide difference between that prayer of faith, which was given to some by a miraculous impulse, before miracles were withheld; while there is still a prayer of faith, an answer to which every real Christian has yet a right to expect its being granted. While we cannot with too much confidence, yet with reverence, pray for all those spiritual blessings which are promised in Christ Jesus, to all believers; yet diffidence equally becomes us, while we lawfully ask that which God may most righteously refuse to grant. We may and should pray fervently for our own daily preservation, and as we are sociable beings, for the preservation of useful and valuable lives, and for the salvation of our earnest and dearest friends and relatives: but we have no warrant to conclude our prayers *must* at all times be answered, and that according to the strength of our imaginations. In many instances like these, God may try our patience, by very painful denials, while some good people, not altogether freed from a degree of innocent enthusiasm, may be brought into considerable perplexities, when such blessings, which we lawfully and properly pray for, are still withheld.

turned out, turned in, most wonderfully to her profit ; so that you see Sir, the Lord led her right.

Slapd. [Smiles.] Well, this is the first time in all my life, that ever I heard of *caps* being laid before the Lord.*

Bri. You know Sir, when I was your Curate, we had frequent discussions on these subjects, and we never could agree ; but I fear that all these strange impulses, and impressions upon the fancy, which naturally lead to the grossest misconceptions of the power of Divine grace, have an unhappy tendency, most sadly to mislead. I confess, I was at times inclined to suspect the reality of these things altogether, till better taught. And I greatly bless God for that kind Providence which has directed me into these parts, where, I trust, I have seen genuine Christianity, without any of these wild extravagancies exemplified in all those wise and holy fruits of righteousness, which must abound in them, who are blessed with the purifying knowledge of the Gospel upon the heart.

I am satisfied with you Sir, that a saving discovery of the evils of sin, can never be made known to us ; but by the convincing influences of the Holy Spirit, and that this is the ground work of all genuine repentance, and conversion to God,—but I cannot believe, that this blessed grace, is created in us, as by a momentary impulse ; but that it becomes a living,

* The reader has this story just as I had it from the lady herself many years ago. She was a very innocent and well-intentioned enthusiast. Many may have weak heads but upright hearts. The bad consequences of trusting on whimsical impressions, may not have the same effect on all, though it is not my wish to cause my weak brother or sister to offend ; yet follies of this sort, are too abundant and notorious to be hid.

I am very happy to acknowledge at the same time, that many of the most judicious, belonging to the same body in which these enthusiastical scenes are exhibited, enter their most solemn protest against them ; their honourable testimony in opposition to such evils, deserves the highest thanks from all, who better understand the Spirit's work, than to suppose such disorderly exhibitions, can be the result of communications from a Being, who is infinitely wise and good.

and growing principle abiding in us, directing us to hate sin, as the worst of evils, and enabling us to watch and pray against it all the days of our lives.

I am therefore well persuaded, that while the work of Divine grace, may have its imperceptible beginnings, it cannot be imperceptible in its progress, and its beneficial effects. That it is as impossible to have holy sorrow of mind, without feeling it, as it is to have agonising pain of body, without being sensible of it. And with your leave, I equally bear my humble testimony against your idea of *instantaneous pardon*, and forgiveness; for though we must be either pardoned or not pardoned, in the eternal mind of God, yet the evidence, or sense of that pardon, can only be made known to me, as I find I am blessed with that "faith, which is of the operation of God," and which consequently, will enable me to bring forth fruit to his glory; and these are the only evidences that the Scriptures warrant; and on which the soul may safely rely.

Whim. Sir, I can't take in your doctrine at all; is it not said, "the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come into his temple."

Bri. And so he did, when the Infant Saviour, unexpectedly came into his Father's Temple, to receive the dedicating ordinance of circumcision: but to found an argument on such mere allusions, is never the way to convince those, who expect a reason for what they are to believe.

Slapd. In my opinion, this notion of instantaneous pardon, as from an *express revelation*, is more objectionable than the former, and creates presumptuous hypocrites, by thousands.

Spri. I cannot see any material difference between the faith of Mr Whimsey, and the faith of those Antinomians, who have lately attempted to gain a footing in our Town; for while the one set talk as if no faith were genuine, which does not come into the mind by an instantaneous impulse; the others insist upon it, that faith is nothing but a mere believing in

the direct testimony of the word: that as Christ has performed the Redeemer's office, therefore he is *their* Redeemer, only because they believe it, even while they are living in adultery, or cutting a throat.*— Yet these both presume they are right, from the mere fancy, or fond persuasion of the mind; while we can have no scriptural evidence that we are justified by faith, according to St. Paul, but as we have works to justify our faith, according to St. James.

Whim. Why Mr Slapdash, I always thought you were a Calvinist.

Slapd. Yes sir, I am a Calvinist; and that makes me such an enemy to all sorts of Antinomianism. But if you mean to call any of us Calvinists, supposing we implicitly adopt the creed that Calvin has made out for us to believe, we renounce the name, however we may revere the memory of the man. We wish no more to follow him, than others who were the great lights, who sprung up in that day. But if the charge is, that we are led by the same spirit to adopt the same truths that were admitted, without controversy, for a hundred years after the reformation; we most readily yield to the charge. But pray Sir, may we be favoured with the definition of what you call Calvinism?

Whim. Why Sir, many with whom I have been acquainted, thus explain what it means. "If we are elected, do whatever wickedness we *will*, we are sure to be saved; and if we are not elected, let us do what we *can* to be saved, we are sure to be damned."

Bri. Now Mr. Whimsey, let me seriously ask you this question. I was your Curate for sixteen months and at times you heard me preach, and though you frequently told me that I was leaning too much towards Calvinism, did you ever hear me drop a single hint, which could have the most distant tendency towards sentiments like these? or from what pulpits, or from what Minister did you ever hear language so blasphemous and profane?

Whim. Not directly so, but this is what is understood by Calvinism.

Slap. Understood by Calvinism!--This fully proves that you understand nothing about it, when those Ministers, you and others so artfully and unmercifully malign, are ever urging just the reverse. Are we not ever pressing upon our careless hearers, that while they are despisers, and profane neglecters of the means of grace, while they will not come unto Christ that they may have life, that they give every evidence in their power against themselves, that they are "given over to a reprobate mind," and are therefore permitted in just wrath to commit "all uncleanness with greediness?" and are we not ever assuring all those, who are "giving diligence to make their calling and election sure," that every repenting and believing sinner, who thus cometh, the Lord will in no wise cast out? And I am further persuaded, that this is much purer, and safer ground to go upon, than any *antinomian persuasion* on the one hand, or any of your *enthusiastic, instantaneous impulses* on the other; and that before any evidences whatever can be produced. When will such men abstain from this wicked art of misrepresenting, what they cannot refute?

Whim. Why I must say, that some sort of preachers say things they ought not, when they want to deter the people from attending on your sort of preaching: and I confess, that such as are accused of holding these doctrines, are as diligent in their way, as we can be in ours! nor are you so apt to *fall from grace** in your way, as we are in ours.

Slapd. If every impression upon the imagination is to be called *grace*, no wonder that it flies off so speedily, and evaporates so completely. So that the mystery of such people falling from *grace*, is easily unraveled,---they fell from that they never had. However wantonly you and others may charge us with

* * Yet that misquoted expression simply means, falling from a profession of the Gospel.

antinomianism, (a foul and filthy system we completely detest,) perhaps on investigation, we shall find our accusers much nearer to it than ourselves ; for while we confess that every good work must have a beginning, yet we are not so inquisitive after first impressions, and for times and dates, as you and others may be. These *go for nothing* with us, but as their *future* effects and consequences prove them to have been from God. We believe that regeneration is a new creation ; an immortal purifying seed ; which liveth and abideth for ever. We conclude therefore, that we have no right to suppose we are justified, and accepted in Christ, but as we are cleansed, and sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, dwelling in us, and enabling us by the grace of perseverance, to persevere unto the end.

Bri. What an excellent sermon Mr. Lovegood preached the other day, upon that text, "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God !" To me, he made it out, as clear as the light, that the Spirit bore witness to nothing but his own work upon the soul, and that the only evidence the Spirit of God gives us, is by the vouchsafement of these graces, which so blessedly belong to those who belong to Him ; and that though we may have our doubts and fears, while we find that those graces are in a weak and languid state ; yet such fears, if they drove us nearer to the Lord, would be a blessing to us, still working for our eternal good ; that we might be led to put our more solemn, and entire dependence alone on him.

And how well he proved, that such holy fears while they direct us to be righteous, they completely prevent us from being self-righteous ; for "that we should trust in ourselves, that we are righteous," for that this holy knowledge of ourselves, would further lead us, not to trust on these his gracious gifts, but on him the merciful giver, who would become more, and more the confidence, and the rejoicing of our souls.

Shapd. Now Sir, from these *dreadful* calvinistic sen-

timents, you may extract all the Antinomianism you can. And when I want a further dash at these dangerous delusions, I am fond of bringing forward that passage, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments."*

Whim. I find you think us very inconsistent, but you are nearer to us in that point, than I thought you were; for it is upon that principle, some of us have grounded our doctrine of a second justification by works.

Slapd. Therein we differ from you as widely as on other points; we believe our sanctification has nothing at all to do with our justification; in short, that we are no more justified by *our good works*, than we are by our *bad ones*, only as they are *evidences* of our being justified, so that we can from the bottom of our hearts adopt the prayer, O God who seest that "we put not our trust in *any thing we do*." Holy fruits being only the *effects*: *they follow after*. Our works thus *follow* us to glory, and it is to God's grace alone, we ascribe all the praise.

Whim. I confess, you explain all your doctrines in a very different way, to what I have heard them explained by many of our preachers.

Slapd. I wish with all my heart I could impute this to their ignorance, but I fear a deal of art is frequently resorted to, in order to terrify the minds of those who are not permitted to read or think for themselves. Were we positively to push home, all the conclusions that we suppose may be drawn from the contrary system, as being that which was *positively designed* by the maintainers of that system, they would be justly indignant at such an unwarrantable attack.

Supposing people are in error, they should at least be permitted to draw thier own conclusions, and not be charged with sentiments they utterly abhor. Though a deluded Jew, rejoices in the murder of Christ by his forefathers, as a just punishment due

* I. John 2, 3.

to an impostor, yet I have no reason to conclude he would rejoice in my murder, if he had it in his power.

Whim. I confess, I never heard you say, when you were my curate, what a preacher said, the Calvinists suppose Jesus Christ might say, when a poor sinner came to him crying for mercy.

Slapd. What could that be?

Whim. Why, the preacher, who was rather an orator, as far as I can recollect, said thus :—supposing a poor penitent, convinced of sin, was to come to Christ, pleading for mercy, and promising to renounce sin, and begging to be pardoned for the time to come ; What are we to suppose ! according to the horrid dogmas of Calvin ; O how I shudder at the thought, that the loving Saviour should say, Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels ; you are none of my elect ; my blood was never shed for you ! But I rather think he went too far.

Slapd. Yes Sir, and with your leave, I'll venture to go a step further. It was, I fear, a designed trick ; an artful falsehood. He must know that we conclude every penitent believer is already accepted in the purpose of God, or he never would have come ; for that “ all that the Father hath given him, *shall* come to him ; and that whosoever cometh he *will* in no wise cast out.”

Bri. Sir, were you not shocked at this most vile perversion of our sentiments ?

Whim. Why Sir, your opinion is, that Christ will never add to the number of his elect.

Bri. Will you answer me one question : can God dispense with his own foreknowledge ? Can he lay aside that which belongs to his infinite existence ? Can an infinite Being, who pre-ordains all causes, be ignorant of the effect which those causes must produce ?

Whim. Some among us, have doubted whether God may not dispense with his own foreknowledge.

Bri. Sir, is it possible you can entertain such a

sentiment? Have you any passage of scripture to bear you out?

Whim. I had rather talk no more on this subject.

Bri. Sir, we most readily agree to drop it; it is a subject too deep for us to fathom. For whatever God's future designs may be, they are most wisely hid from us, that we may attend to that which is our duty, according to his commands.

Whim. I think the Calvinists are misunderstood. Good-morning to you Gentlemen. I have a long ride to take this evening.

Spri. O! but Sir, you must stop and dine with us. Our religious controversies should not interrupt our friendship and esteem for each other.

The invitation was accepted, the same subject was continued at the dinner, which will not be narrated, as these pages inadvertently swell beyond their first design, still a valuable end will be answered by this dialogue, if we are led to see more of the wisdom of God in his work upon the heart, and are less free in our unguarded conclusions against others.

DIALOGUE XLIV,

MR. WORTHY AND FAMILY, MR. LOVEGOOD, SIR THOMAS
FRIEND, AND FARMER LITTLEWORTH.

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS, DISGRACE, AND RUIN.

THE reader's attention has now been engaged for a considerable time at Sandover; and having been informed of the happy termination of the melancholy death of Mr. Merryman, he is once more invited back to Brookfield, to hear the conclusion of these events. Nothing occurred for several months of sufficient consequence to demand a share of the reader's attention, excepting the promotion of Thomas Newman, to the office of Parish Clerk, upon the death of Andrew Snuffle. This was an event of considerable magnitude to himself and his family.

My Readers would have been pleased to see what humble attention he manifested, when, for the first time, he escorted the worthy Vicar from the vestry through the crowded aisles into the reading desk; with what becoming gravity and devotion he next entered his own desk; and how attentively he conducted that part of the service, which it was now his office to perform; while the congregation could not but admire how well he looked, dressed in a decent suit of grey clothes; and indeed clad in new apparel, *from top to toe*, by the benevolence of Mr. Worthy. At the same time, it may easily be supposed, what the general feelings of the large assemblage were, for the credit of the new Clerk of Brookfield Church.

And as for poor Betty, what she felt for him throughout the service, and especially when he raised the psalm, is not so easily to be conceived. I am happy however to say, that he performed his office to the admiration of all; insomuch, that in the church yard, (how it happened I cannot say,) Mr. Worthy and his family thus accosted him: "How do you do *Mister* Newman? we congratulate you very heartily upon your preferment—You have conducted your part of the service admirably to our satisfaction; and may you long live to enjoy your office!" While in addition to this, it seems, Mr. Worthy, at all times affable and kind, gave him a friendly shake by the hand.

No wonder that honest Thomas was quite upset, by such an address from this *right honourable esquire*; and how to reply he could not tell. But that he should, for the first time be called, *Mister* Newman, surprised him most of all. He was satisfied this title could not have been recently imported, either from London or from Bath, as Mr. Worthy knew better, than to waste his time or property, in visiting any places of public resort, but as necessity required. Brookfield Hall was his paradise; and there he almost constantly resided to make every one as happy as himself.

I question however, as modern times go, if Mr. Worthy went much beyond the mark, in conferring such a title on this respectable peasant; for if, according to the general courtesy which prevails throughout the metropolis, where every shopman is a *Mister*, and every washerwoman and charwoman a *Mistress*, why should not the worthy Clerk of Brookfield Church be addressed as *Mister* also?

As for the title of Esquire, we know to what an extent it is now bestowed. It belongs almost to every Haberdasher and Hosier, to every Lawyer and Lawyer's clerk, and nearly to every Apothecary and Apothecary's scout: and of late, it seems every sprig of divinity at either of our universities, is an Esquire, till the transmogrifying hand of the Bishop forbids

that title to exist any longer. And as every Esquire has a right to his armorial bearings, from some of his renowned ancestors, no doubt, but by the assistance of a little *endless genealogy*, all these esquires may resume them, whenever they choose.

Though my good friend Thomas Newman may thus stand registered among the *Misters*, from the ecclesiastical rank to which he has been advanced, yet for my sake, higher than this, I hope he will not attempt to climb; for though he may deserve not a little credit in understanding Divinity, if not in its most critical, yet in its best and purest sense, better than many a Doctor so called. And though very frequently a wind from the North, is apt to blow these honours over to us in large abundance, (fees being first duly paid,) yet I confess I might feel it a little mortifying, were I to hear of *Doctor Newman*, while I must be contented to be plain *Mister* (alas for me!) all the days of my life. But yet I conceive, if *Mister Newman* really were to meet with one, who might be willing to pay the purchase money, for a Doctor's degree on his behalf; he would certainly shew his good sense and modesty in declining the honour, as many others have done before him. He and I humbly acknowledge, we have never enriched the world by our scientific knowledge, or literary pages; and therefore cannot deserve those honours, which we conceive to be well and wisely bestowed on those, whose respectable abilities, and high erudition, deserve such a distinguished appellation. And while many are actually deterred from accepting such honours as would well become them, by others assuming them; these must be left to try, how far being mounted upon such lofty pedestals, as were never designed for them, will make them a single atom bigger than they really are.

But while we all rejoiced at the promotion of this engaging peasant, an unhappy event took place, which tried Farmer Littleworth and his family to the quick. The Reader will remember, how Miss Patty Little-

worth was married, much against the farmer's inclination, to William Frolic : and as might be expected, many were the calamities which resulted from this unhappy match.

After a considerable time had elapsed, the farmer went down one Monday morning to Mr. Lovegood's, with the following story :—

Far. O Sir ! I hope you will excuse me, I am come to tell you of my fresh troubles, if you have not heard of them before : Sam Blood, Ned Sparkish, and my son-in-law, William Frolic, are all cast for death, and left for execution on Saturday next.—I think my poor daughter will break her heart.

Loveg. I feel for you exceedingly, but I heard of that news before from Mr. Worthy, who called here about half an hour ago, and I was just coming to give you a visit on this very trying event.

Far. Oh Sir ! what can be done ? my poor wife is almost in as much trouble as my daughter, for though at first, she was quite as much against the match as I could be, but when he made ever so many vows and promises that he would reform, she began to give way, and she now blames herself, that she was not more resolute against it.

Loveg. Ah Mr. Littleworth ! we have very little reason to hope for the *reformation* of manners, without the *renovation* of the heart.

Far. Aye aye, Sir, I know that is very true—But what can be done ? if he could only be saved from the gallows, that is all I want. He is such a wicked, wild *blade*, that I should not at all care if he were to be transported to Botany Bay for life, if it were only that he might be banished from his wicked companions.

Loveg. Sir, had we not better walk to the Hall, and consult with Mr. Worthy on this unhappy occasion ?

Far. If the 'Squire should not think us intruding, I should be very glad if his honour would but suffer us to trespass a little on his time, that we may have some of his good advice.

Loveg. We all know how willing he is to give his kind counsel on every needed occasion—Come Sir, let us go directly.

Mrs. Loveg. Oh my dear! you must not go to Mr. Worthy's in that shabby hat and coat. [To the maid.] Nelly, step up stairs, and bring down your Master's other coat and waistcoat, and his best hat.

Loveg. Never mind my dear, Mr. Worthy won't be offended at my old coat; no man more easily dispenses with the formalities of dress.

Mrs. Loveg. But you know, Sir Thomas and Lady Friend are there, and I should be ashamed to see you go out of the house, without something better to appear in before such company.

[Mr. Lovegood submits, and is properly equipped. The Farmer and he are introduced into the library; where Mr. Worthy and Sir Thomas were in conversation over some new-invented models, for the improvement of husbandry.]

Loveg. Sir, I am afraid we interrupt you, but we wait upon you for your advice, respecting the distressing situation of Mr. Littleworth's family.—His wife and daughter are almost broken-hearted.

Wor. Come in; sit down: Sir Thomas and I were only talking over this new-invented threshing machine, and some other improvements in husbandry; but we will lay that aside, and shall be ready to give you our best advice. I have already told Sir Thomas, some of the circumstances of this unhappy event.

Sir Thos. Yes Sir, but I don't know many of the particulars.

Loveg. We are ready to furnish you Sir, with the best information in our power, and what are the designs of our present application.—Perhaps Sir, we may be favoured with your assistance, as you are so

well known in the county, on my distressed friend's behalf.

Far. O Sir! if your honour could but lend your aid with our worthy 'Squire, to save my poor son-in-law from the gallows, that is all I want. I confess he is unfit to live, but I am sure he is very unfit to die.

Sir Thos. How came the youth in this unhappy situation?—What are his connexions? It is much to be lamented that your daughter made such an unfortunate choice.

Far. Ah Sir! I did all in my power to *thwart* the match; and so did my wife too at the first; but somehow, at last, he contrived to get on her *blind side*, as we say, by making such promises and vows, how he would mend his manners, and reform his life, if we would but consent to the match. And then there was a little money in the case; for old master Frolic, of the Nag's head, who has always been fond of entertaining his customers, out of a set of low vulgar joke books, used to get a number of them together, and has been making himself rich by the *ruination* of half the Parish; for his house was never clear from a set of tipplers, and dram-drinkers, *of all sorts and sizes*. And then he used to tell us what famous expectations he had from an old *miserly* rich uncle who lived in our Town, provided he did but reform.

Loveg. I can assure you Sir Thomas, no sort of blame rests on Mr. Littleworth on that score; for he always suspected the fallacy of the young man's resolutions and pretensions to reformation: but the young woman's foolish fondness for the unhappy rake, carried all before it, while my good old friend always disliked the man, and his connexions, as bad as his occupation.

Far. Why your honour, what could be expected from a wicked, wild young chap, who was acquainted with all the rakes up and down the country, far and wide; while his father's house was the *main* place of their resort! and though my dear Harry was once

almost as bad, yet there is no trusting any one till they are converted by the grace of God, as I am sure he is,—the Lord be praised.

Sir Thos. Yes, my respectable neighbour, Dr. Orderly was telling me what a wonderful reformation had taken place on your son. It is a pity the young man could not have been persuaded to *fortify his purposes of amendment with stronger resolutions*, after his marriage.

Loveg. Ah Sir! the worthy Doctor and I, have had many a long conversation on that subject, but our firmest resolutions are sure to fail, while corrupted nature prevails. Good can never stand, while it has nothing but an evil heart for its foundation.

Far. Aye, in my wicked days, I was a wonderful great resolution-maker, but I no sooner made them, than I was sure to break them; yet this makes me pity the poor youth to the bottom of my heart, though by his wicked ways, especially since his father's death, he has been the *ruination* of his mother, my daughter, and himself.

Sir Thos. What, then is his poor father lately dead?

Far. Oh yes, Sir, he died about two months after my daughter was married to his son, he was *desperate* ill about that time; and though he was one of the most wicked, *romancing* fellows in the Parish, and kept up a deal of *merriment* in his house to entertain his customers; yet when he came to die, he had a *conceivance* that his son would ruin his family by his wicked, wild ways, and would oftentimes talk to him very gravely, about reforming his manners, but it was more out of fear lest he should spend all his money, than any thing else; and that made him so mighty desirous that he should marry my daughter, that he might get into a sober family, as he called it, though he had drunk himself into a dropsy, by tippling with every body who came into his house.

Sir Thos. The father then was not such an extravagant spendthrift as his son.

Far. Oh no, his *main* delight was to get all the custom he could : he did not care who was ruined by their drunken ways at his house, if he could but make himself rich, through their wickedness and folly.

Sir Thos. The existence of such houses is a very great evil. They are the ruin of thousands.

Wor. You should have said, of tens of thousands— If however, I could but reach them, they should not long exist ; but as almost all the Town of Mapleton is under the influence of Lord Rakish, there is no doing any good in that place ; what I attempt to suppress, that he is sure to support. Our own Village and neighbourhood is kept in tolerable order, and it grieves me that I can proceed no further.

Sir Thos. Well, and I have attempted to persuade my worthy friend Doctor Orderly, to act with me as a Magistrate ; but his objection always was, that he should only perplex his mind, and, after all, be able to do little or no good : for that there are two or three of the Clergy, who are by no means like the Doctor, and they are entirely under the management of some of the gentry in the neighbourhood, who are in the commission, and who are quite loose and careless, and mind nothing but their sports ; and no good can be expected, while it rests with bad people, to correct the bad manners of others, especially when the Clergy degrade themselves, by submitting to be the dupes of the profligate among the great : but as the old man was so very anxious that his son might reform, I hope before he died, *he reformed himself.*

Far. Ah Sir ! we make a bad hand of it when we *reform ourselves.* There is an old schoolmaster in our Parish, Master Goodenough, the 'Squire knows him, and he desired him to settle his affairs, and to send for Mr. Dolittle to give him the sacrament ; and while they were lifting him up in his bed, he fell back and died before ever he had made his will, or received the sacrament ; and his death soon proved the *ruination* of all the family.

Sir Thos. How so, Mr. Littleworth ?

Far. Why Sir, directly as his father died, he laid his hands upon all he had left behind him ; and before he was well cold in his grave, he set off at such a rate, while every good-for-nothing fellow was after him, far and near. For though his old father, in his wicked way, had mustered up full two thousand pounds, yet in a little more than fourteen months, it was all gone.

Sir Thos. How, in the name of wonder, could he, in his line, squander away such a deal of money in so short a time !

Far. Why Sir, first of all, the extravagant *blade* gave eighty guineas for a very fine hunter ; but this he said would pay him very well, as it would bring a deal of their sort of rakish company to his house : but instead of their being his guests, he would treat them all ; and then try if he could not pay himself back again by gaming with them ; and then they would make him half drunk, and pick his pocket of hundreds.

Sir Thos. No wonder that he so soon ruined himself, if he got connected with a set of gamblers and sharpers.

Far. Why your Honour, he was after them morning noon, and night ; and then he got acquainted with that strange wild *blade*, 'Squire Madcap, who knows how to take care of himself, while he can trick others ; and because the 'Squire knew he had a little money, he pretended to be very gracious with him ; and he got him to give two hundred guineas for a race-horse, which was to beat all the horses in the country. And away he went with him to Gambleton races, cracking and boasting *as how* he was worth double the money, as he thought he was to get thousands by him. And there, by his gamings and bettings, he lost five hundred pounds, and came home to his wife half mad, through disappointment and rage.

Sir Thos. No wonder that he brought himself to ruin by such extravagances as these.—These public

horse-races are the destruction of thousands. I never suffer any of my family to go near them.

Far. Aye, and when he found that his money was almost all gone, he would be swearing by his Maker, in the most *blaspheming* way, that either he would go on to *ruination*, or fetch it all back again; and it was not above fourteen months after his father's death, before what the old man had got in his wicked ways was all spent by this rakish blade, in ways if possible, much *wickeder* still. Aye, and what is worse than all, he has ruined his poor mother, and unmarried sister into the bargain, by spending what by right, should have come to them; though as to his sister, she is a *sad saucy puss* as ever lived; and no wonder, when we consider how they bred her up; but I must say nothing on that score: the Lord be praised that I was not permitted to live according to the natural corruptions of my heart, all the days of my life!

Sir Thos. This has proved a very unfortunate match for your daughter.

Far. Ah Sir, though he appeared mighty loving to her at first, yet they had not been married together above a month, before she began to *rue* the day that ever she saw him. There she would be coming to our house, to tell of all her grievances, when he would be away from her upon his rakish tricks, night after night; and when I heard that he had got linked in with that desperate fellow, Sam Blood, who has been in goal before now, I thought what would become of it; and my poor daughter feels all the more since she knows I could not advise her against the match; but now she hears he is cast for death, and left for execution, she is almost distracted.

Wor. This is a terrible family calamity, and justice must at times, be stern. I fear it will be very difficult to prevent the fatal stroke, especially as the young man has been known to be so wild and worthless. And his connexion with that horrid fellow Sam Blood will go much against both him and young Sparkish,

though I am told that Sam Blood is by far the most daring and villanous of the three.

Sir Thos. I am not as yet acquainted with the particulars of the offence.

Far. If your honour can but save his life, I shall be glad to tell you all I know. After he had lost all he was worth among these gamblers by his horse-racings, excepting the little maintenance I settled on my daughter, and what he still got by selling liquors, his next project was to see if he could not fetch back his money again, by cock-fighting.

Wor. So that when he could not afford to game in a more extravagant way, he attempted it in another style.

Loveg. These abominably cruel sports are productive of a deal of evil, wherever they are permitted to exist.

Sir Thos. I supprest one of their cock-pits not long ago, that some loose rakes were attempting to promote in our neighbourhood, though it was with some difficulty, through the negligence and connivance of some other magistrates in those parts.

Far. It had been well for Will Frolic, if there had been none of those places within his reach; for there he went off to Gambleton with his fighting-cocks, and we never heard of him for three days, till after he was committed to gaol.

Wor. Will you tell Sir Thomas how this unhappy event took place?

Far. Why your Honour knows how Sam Blood and Ned Sparkish, and my Son-in-law, all went to that wicked Town, were Lord Rakish and 'Squire Wild were to have first a bull-baiting, next a boxing-match, then a cudgel-playing, and afterwards a cock-fighting in the evening. I don't think there are two such *gentleman* blackguards to be found any where like them; for all the other *common* blackguards, are sure to be after them, far and wide.

Loveg. You must excuse the strong language of my good old friend, Sir Thomas. And no wonder, since

has felt such mischievous consequences from their example.

Sir Thos. Oh no, Mr. Littleworth is quite right.-- I thought I had two such blackguards as helpers my stables, I should surely turn them off, lest they would corrupt the rest; neither estate nor titles can make the real gentleman after all; [to Farmer Littleworth,] But Sir, will you continue your story?

Far. Why Sir, after they had been at it all day, tiring and gaming with the swindlers and sharpers, who came together from all parts of the country, they were in hopes that they should get it back again by their cock-fightings in the evening: and there they were till it did it all up; and got themselves in debt into the bargain; and then as they say, by the persuasion of Sam Blood, they agreed to get up at two o'clock in the morning, and rob the public-house where they were; and after they had broken open different cupboards and places, to get all the money and plate, by knocking down a large tea-board, they awakened the landlord, and his family; and just as they were opening the door to run off with their prey, such an alarm was made by the firing of a pistol, that they were all exactly stopped in the street.

Vor. I fear it will be a difficult task to save thierselves, for it seems they had all loaded pistols; and though Sam Blood first snapt his pistol at the landlord's son, without effect, yet he took a second aim at the young man, while he was attempting to escape his life, and gave him a very dangerous wound on his shoulder.

Far. Now William Frolic says, he can declare on oath of a dying man, that he had no pistol of his own, but that Sam Blood, while all in a hurry, that they might make their escape, lent him one of his, though he never attempted to fire it; and as for that simple fellow Ned Sparkish, no matter if he was once whipt at the cart's tail, from one end of the Parish to the other, yet he had no pistol at all, only he made a flourish with an old rusty sword which he

found in the house, that he might make his escape ; and they say he was a very orderly lad, till Sam Blood got hold of him and led him astray.

Sir Thos. If these circumstances might be made known to the Judge, perhaps life might be granted to your son-in-law and the other youth.

Wor. As to Sam Blood, I should suppose that no interference for him can be attended with success.—Justice, at times, demands a sacrifice which must not be dispensed with ; and where an attempt to commit murder is added to thievery, the crime becomes very heinous indeed.

Far. But as neither my Son-in-law, nor Ned Sparkish had any thoughts of that sort, perhaps my Lord Judge might yet send them a pardon, if he knew the rights of it. Oh if your Honour could but get the Judge to spare his life, how thankful should I be !

Wor. Why there is one favourable event. Mr. Lovely, in consequence of his possessing his old Uncle's property, has been appointed Sheriff for the County : perhaps he may obtain mercy for two of them, when it is fully understood that no intentional murder was designed, though under such a supposition, no wonder that they were all left for death.

Far. O Sir ! if you two worthy gentlemen would but write out a petition, I know that dear Gentleman 'Squire Lovely would be mighty glad to present it to his Lordship. As to my daughter, poor girl, she has miscarried once ; and she begins again to draw near her time, and she sits crying and sobbing all the day long : it breaks our very hearts to hear her,—and as to my wife and I, especially as the infirmities of old age begin to creep fast upon us, these troubles are enough to bring down our grey hairs, with sorrow to the grave.

Mrs. Wor. But as the assizes are now over, the Judge must have left the county, and Mr. Lovely must have returned ; and I am told, Mrs. Lovely expects to be confined the latter end of this month, or perhaps sooner ; and as this is rather an unex-

pected event from the weak state of her health. I don't know he will choose to leave the house again, under such circumstances, though none of us can have a doubt respecting the affectionate willingness of his mind.

Sir Thos. Why, I am told, Mr. Lovely stands very high in the Judge's favour, on account of his excellent character, and engaging conduct; and as it is the same Judge who favoured me with a visit when he went this circuit on the last summer assizes, I will venture to write myself on the behalf of these unhappy creatures. I know the Judge to be a very considerate and merciful man: he will be glad to hear of any circumstances which lessens their guilt.

Wor. Well then Mr. Littleworth, that no time may be lost, we will write directly, and state these favourable circumstances, and send the letters by this night's post.

Far. O Sir! but if young 'Squire Lovely should be called from home, or the letter should miscarry, had I not better send my dear child Harry with the letters?

Wor. It will be certainly the safest, and at the same time it will look more respectful. And if our worthy Minister could go too, it would be the better still.

Loveg. Oh Sir! you are for sending me upon every errand.

Wor. Because no one is so fit. And I am sure it would be a great satisfaction to Mr. Henry Littleworth, if you could but attend him with your counsel and advice.

Far. Aye, that it would, and I am sure he will sadly need such company. Dear child! what must he feel, when he goes to see those poor creatures in irons, and locked up in a goal like so many wild beasts, when he recollects what a wicked *blade* he was, before he felt the converting grace of God in his own heart. [To Mr. Lovegood.] And oh Sir! what a blessing it might be to the souls of these poor

thoughtless creatures, now they have brought themselves into such trouble, if you could but go and tell them of the free grace and mercy of Jesus Christ to poor perishing sinners, and how blessedly he can change their hearts.

Loveg. Oh Mr. Littleworth, your son will know how to talk upon that subject from his own experience better than I should.

Wor. Well I find at times, we must come to a point with you directly: It is now Monday, and Saturday being the market-day, is the appointed time for their execution; therefore not an hour can be lost. I shall send for a chaise from Mapleton, and you shall both be off by six o'clock to-morrow morning, that you may if possible see Mr. Lovely by noon: we will this very evening draw up the petition, Sir Thomas, and I will sign it: and I am sure Mr. Lovely will take it immediately to the Judge, if possible: perhaps he will have to follow him some way through the circuit, though I dare say he'll soon overtake him.

Loveg. Indeed Sir, you put too much upon me.

Wor. No Sir, nor half enough. I know the defects of your disposition better than you know them yourself: your modesty and diffidence cramp your zeal, and limit your usefulness; how wrong you did in resisting the overtures of Mr. Lovely, to be his Sheriff's Chaplain, though he has certainly fixed on a very proper person, in appointing young Mr. Brightman to that office.

Loveg. Ah Sir! if there had not been a Mr. Brightman in the case, I might have accepted the appointment: and you know how well he can perform the office.

Wor. I believe, whenever you are appointed to a Bishoprick, no man upon earth will say with a better conscience, "*nolo episcopari*," than yourself.

Loveg. Under such positive orders, I must obey; and, as I can return again to my station by the next Sunday, I am not inclined to urge another objection.

Far. Oh Sir, the Lord be praised! the Lord be praised! I'll go home directly and tell Harry to get ready as fast as he can, and he shall tell Patty what we are about. Poor Girl! she is ready to break her heart.

Wor. [To Mr. Lovegood.] But wunt you drop us a short prayer before we part. [Lovegood complies, and only uses the following collect:]

“Prevent us O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name, and, finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Wor. [After prayer.] Sir, you are never too long in prayer, but now you have been much too short.

Loveg. Yes Sir, but time directed us to comprise much in a little; and if God prevents,* or goes before us in all our doings, we cannot have a better guide; and while we ask that all our works may be begun, continued, and ended in him, we can neither request, nor receive a greater blessing, and then we shall certainly glorify his holy name. They all retire.

* Such is the original meaning of the word, from *Prævenio*, to be before.

DIALOGUE XLV.

MR. WORTHY AND FAMILY, MR. LOVEGOOD, AND HENRY
LITTLEWORTH.

PRISON MEDITATIONS.

NO other alteration in the plan settled in the former dialogue took place, than that by the humble request of Mrs. Sparkish, she might be permitted to take a part in the same chaise procured for Mr. Lovegood and Mr. H. Littleworth, by the benevolent Mr. Worthy, that she might know how far the present attempt to save her son's life might succeed; or else bathe him in her tears, before he was given over into the hands of the executioner for death.

On the return of Henry and Mr. Lovegood, they both went to Mr. Worthy's by his peculiar desire. Mrs. Sparkish alighted at her own house, as they passed through Mapleton to Brookfield Hall; they did not arrive till late on the Saturday afternoon; the dialogue thus began:

Wor. [To Mr. Lovegood.] How do you do my good Sir? [to Henry.] How are you Mr. Henry? we have scarcely finished our tea, will you take a cup with us?

[They accept it; and while the tea was handed about, the conversation continued.]

Wor. We have followed you with many an anxious thought, since you left us. I almost fear by your looks to ask what has been the result.

Loveg. Sir, I never was so agitated in all my life, what I have seen this morning, and indeed all through, has almost entirely upset me.

Wor. What, then have all of them been left to suffer?

Loveg. Oh no, Sir, Sam Blood alone was, and I think very deservedly, given over to death: he was a most desperate, hardened, bloody-minded man.

Wor. Our Judges are very merciful.—They will always save lives if they can; though justice must not always sleep, or we should not be permitted to sleep in our beds.

Loveg. Sir, we have just proved that to be the case, as it respects poor Frolic and Sparkish.—But still, to see a fellow-creature hung up by the neck like a dog, as unfit to live, what a mortifying event! what a proof of the fall!—The first man born into the world by natural generation, was as bad as he could be.—A murderer of his righteous brother.

Mrs. Wor. But Sir, we are solicitous to hear a more regular narration of these events.

Loveg. Madam, it begins to be late, and it is Saturday evening, and Mrs. Lovegood and the children will be anxious to see me as soon as may be.

Mrs. Wor. But Sir, we will send word to Mrs. Lovegood that you are returned safe, though we would not wish to detain you long, while you give us a short detail of the result of your journey.

Loveg. Well, then Mr. Henry, you must assist me, if I omit any circumstances which are material.

Hen. Sir, I dare say you will remember most of them—I never shall forget what I have seen. If it had not been for the grace of God, William Frolic and I, who have been such sinners together, might have been hanged together on that very day on which Sam Blood was called to suffer.

Mrs. Wor. [To Mrs Merryman.] My dear, won't the story be too much for you, as your spirits are so weak?

Mrs. Mer. Oh my dear Mr. Merryman! how he

used to say he always aimed at the worst first, because he was once so thoughtless himself: I think I shall be able to bear the story, and I beg it may not be shortened on my account.

Loveg. Why Madam, there was a deal of mercy intermixed with judgment: I hope the hearing of it may not be too much for you, though altogether, it has been almost too much for me.

Wor. How long was it, after you set out, before you reached Mr. Lovely?

Loveg. Not till near two o'clock. Those cross roads you know, run bad, and it is too far for one stage, so that we were obliged to bait, or the poor horses would have suffered exceedingly.

Wor. And how did you find the dear creatures?

Loveg. Oh Sir! we were almost as much overcome with joy when there, as we were afterwards with grief and suspense. Dear Mrs. Lovely was brought to bed of a fine boy the very day before we went. It seems this event took place rather sooner than was expected, though the mother and the child, are both in a fair way to do well. The dear young man was so overcome by this mercy, that he could do nothing but weep for joy.

Mrs. Wor. Why I told her when she was in the family way, that I had no doubt but she would do well, as her mind was so much more at rest since their marriage.

Hen. But oh the joy of the neighbourhood on this event! It is amazing how much they are both beloved.

Wor. And not without cause. His very natural disposition, prompts him to every thing that is kind; and since he has been blessed with the grace of God, and has been possessed of his old uncle's property, he has both the will and the power, to do almost all the good his heart could wish.—In this instance it has been thoroughly verified, that "the wealth of the sinner, has been laid up for the just."

Loveg. But this joyful event in Mr. Lovely's fa-

mily, had nearly been attended with very fatal consequences to the unhappy youths; for Mr. Lovely, supposed at first, that we were only come on a congratulatory visit, on the birth of his son; though he was surprised how we could have heard of the news so soon; and it was sometime before we could interrupt him with our message, he was so overcome with joy.

Mrs. Wor. Certainly it was a hard request, to ask the dear young man, at such an early stage of his wife's delivery, to leave her so soon.

Loveg. Oh Sir, his attachment to his dear wife and child, is beyond description, as you may naturally suppose from his most amiable disposition. And after we had told him our errand, and shewed him the petition to the judge, you may easily guess what a struggle his mind was in. Every quarter of an hour he was enquiring after, or repeating his visits to his dearest Ann, and the little one; and to think of such a sudden and hasty separation, though but for a day or two, perplexed him exceedingly.

Wor. You really had a difficulty to surmount, how did you accomplish it?

Loveg. Yes Sir; and besides this, he had another difficulty before him. An express was sent him but the day before, informing him of the dangerous illness of his rich uncle, and was in hourly expectation to hear of his death; but notwithstanding all, he immediately expressed his willingness to be the intercessor for these poor creatures; and however painful, even an hour's absence from Mrs. Lovely might now be, yet as she appeared so well, and as life or death depended on the journey, he was determined to undertake it: the only remaining difficulty was, how to open matters to her, so as to create the least possible pain, or anxiety on her mind.

Wor. And how did you contrive it?

Loveg. Why about half an hour after we had been in the house, after some conversation on these difficulties, he determined that I should be introduced

into Mrs. Lovely's chamber, and in the most gentle manner, open the business to her ; making it my request, together with Mr. Henry Littleworth's, that he might be spared but for two or three days at furthest, to petition for the lives of these poor creatures.

Mrs. Mer. I hope the story was not too much for her.

Loveg. She was almost as much affected at my unexpected visit, as she was at hearing my story ; but directly as she heard it, she was as desirous as we could be, that Mr. Lovely should immediately undertake the journey, and addressed him in such language, as was very affecting and kind.

Mrs. Wor. I suppose she would. Both their minds are admirably calculated for each other.

Loveg. When Mr. Lovely expressed his sorrow at the thoughts of leaving her, even for so short a time, and how grieved he should be, if any thing should happen during his short absence : her language was, " O no, my dear George, you and I have given ourselves up a thousand times into the hands of our most merciful God. I have a number of good friends around me ; I shall want for nothing while you are absent. I know it would almost break your heart, were any thing to keep you back from saving the lives of these poor creatures : I know your disposition so well, that it would be the cruellest thing to prevent you. Oh no, no ! go my dear George, go directly, go if it were only for the sake of good old farmer Littleworth ; such a trial is enough to break his very heart : you and I know what it was once to be under very sharp trials ourselves ; and we make ourselves happy, only as we make others happy in return."

Wor. What a kind amiable creature she is !

Mrs. Wor. It must have been very affecting, to see with what meekness she submitted to the call, while she was lying on her bed with her babe by her side, and her affectionate husband ready to weep, even under this temporary separation, while still so anxious to

perform this act of mercy towards these condemned criminals.

Mrs. Mer. Ah me !—I had such a husband once—
[She weeps, and retires out of the room.]

Loveg. [To Mrs. Worthy.] Oh Madam, I am sorry I touched upon that subject.

Mrs. Wor. Ah Sir, it cannot be helped.---Mr. Merryman is scarce ever out of my daughter's mind ; and though we all loved him so much, yet we scarce ever mention his name, as at all times it so exceedingly revives her grief, she cannot bear to hear any body speak of him but herself.

Wor. But how did you next proceed ?

Loveg. Why Sir, after a short prayer, Mr. Lovely immediately prepared for the journey, while it was determined that he should set off early on the next morning to overtake the judge, before he left the circuit, and present him with the petition ; and that Mr. Henry Littleworth, the unhappy Mrs. Sparkish, and myself, should go and visit the condemned prisoners in the county gaol ; but then we all agreed, that it would be highly improper to give them the most distant hint that application was making by Mr. Lovely to save thier lives, as it might buoy them up with false hopes, had he failed in his attempt.

Wor. Certainly that was the most prudent.—This must have been a very affecting interview.

Loveg. A very affecting one indeed.—After we had refreshed ourselves at the inn, we immediately repaired to the prison, but found we were too late to gain admittance till the next morning.—Poor Mrs. Sparkish was exceedingly affected at this refusal, who had frequently mentioned, during the journey, what her mind had felt from the example she had set before her son.

Wor. Ah ! that is the case with many, who never repent of an evil, till they see its bad consequences and effects.

Loveg. And no doubt, but it was, on this account, that the first interview which took place the next morning,

was so very affecting. There was nothing but sobbing and weeping between them for a considerable time: at length she cried, "Oh my child, what would I give if I could but save your life! Oh that I had set you a better example; I fear my behaviour has been the cause of your ruin" He then cried out, "Oh mother, we must forgive each other, as I am now so soon to die!" Then he looked at me and cried, "Oh Mr. Lovegood! had I minded what you have preached, I never had worn these irons, or have been condemned to such a disgraceful end.

Wor. How such miserable sinners are led to reproach themselves, after they have accomplished their own ruin, by their extravagance and folly, and profane neglect of God.

Loveg. And such indeed, were the feelings of the unhappy youth; for first he began telling me such an history of his life, as was quite shocking till I was obliged to beg of him to desist, by advising him rather to confess the sins of his abominably profligate life before God, rather than before man. It seems that his connexion with common prostitutes, was the cause of his ruin, and that rendered his conscience the very sink of sin, and a very hell of guilt. He then pointed to Mr. Henry, who was retired to the further part of the room, with his Brother-in-law, William Frolic, crying, "Oh what fools! what devils Frolic and I have been, not to follow the example of Henry Littleworth! we have ruined ourselves, both soul and body, while he has nothing before him, though once so wild, and now so changed, but a prosperous and a happy life."

Wor. Such sort of expressions sound like genuine repentance.

Loveg. Oh Sir! there is no knowing under such circumstances.—There was one speech of his, which made me fear that all his repentance was more the effects of terror than of grace: he said that if Mr. Worthy or Lord Rakish, for that he had the honour to know his lordship, could but get him a pardon, he

would lead quite another life for the time to come. And his poor mother had almost said too much, as she knew the plan laid for the saving of his life; but I immediately checked her, by observing that false hopes, were sometimes attended with more fatal consequences, than downright despair.

Wor. But Mr. Henry, do let us hear how you succeeded with your unhappy Brother-in-law.

Hen. Oh Sir! I cannot but entertain a hope that as he has been saved from the gallows, so he will be saved from hell, but God only knows. A future day alone can prove the fact.

Mrs. Wor. Come then, I hope you will be able to tell us a more pleasing story; if so, I'll call in my daughter.—Any thing which gives her comfort, greatly promotes ours. [It is done,—Mrs. Merryman attempts to attend to the utmost of her power.]

Mrs. Wor. My dear, I called you in to hear what Mr. Henry has to say about poor William Frolic, he hopes, that by the grace of God, this awful dispensation may have been over-ruled for the salvation of his soul.

Wor. Now Mr. Henry, we are quite prepared to hear what passed between you both.

Hen. Why Sir, I perceived he was remarkably struck at the unexpected visit from Mr. Lovegood and myself; and while Edward Sparkish, his Mother and Mr. Lovegood, were in conversation with each other, he and I retired into a corner of the room: he directly burst into tears, and cried, "Oh Henry! what could influence you to come to see such a horrid wretch as I have been, before I am given over to die for my crimes, when I once did all in my power to make you as bad as myself; and then I should have had to answer for the damnation of your soul, as well as my own.—Can you forgive me?" I directly cried, "yes, and Christ can forgive us both."—He answered, "he has forgiven you: you have been a true penitent; but God only knows, what sort of repentance mine is, for on Saturday I am sure to die, and have

no time to prove the sincerity of my heart, by better ways." As I could not but help crying all the time I talked to him, I could only say to him, "Oh William! remember the thief upon the cross."

Loveg. No wonder that you were so much affected, when you recollected the terrible attachment which subsisted between you, when you were both "living without God in the world."

Hen. Oh Sir! that was just the point. He directly cried out, "Oh that I might be yet permitted to live, that you might take me as your companion! I hope I should prove the sincerity of my repentance, both before God and man.—But it is now too late. We have been the partakers of the crimes of that hardened desperate fellow, Sam Blood; and though we always dissuaded him against murder, yet being linked in with him, we thought it necessary, at least in appearance, to act as he directed; and by that means we have forfeited our lives. And then he cried, "O good God, what a most wicked heart mine must be, or I could not have been so sinful and abominable all the days of my short life! I have ruined myself; I have ruined my wife: I have ruined the peace of your family by marrying your Sister; and I fear, I shall be ruined to all eternity."

Wor. All this sounds well.

Hen. He once said that he heard Mr. Merryman preach, soon after his conversion; curiosity having excited him to hear one that he had frequently been with, on his different hunting expeditions, how he would act as a serious preacher of the Gospel; and conviction, he says, though he continued so wicked, never ceased to follow him after that time.

Wor. [Sighs and says] Ah dear Mr. Merryman! [Here Mrs. Merryman's feelings were again revived, while the recollection of such a loss of one so useful as a Minister; so pleasant as a man; so devoted as a Christian, ran throughout the company, and created among them that sympathetic silent grief, as prevented the continuation of the conversation, till

Mr. Worthy rang the bell, and ordered a glass of wine for each of the parties : this, though an unusual custom after tea at Brookfield Hall, was now acceptable, especially to the travellers, who had but just finished their journey, and whose minds were so much agitated by those very impressive events which were now the subject of conversation : the writer also will take this opportunity to lay aside his pen, that his spirits and recollection, may be recruited, before he attempts the concluding narration of this tale of woe.

DIALOGUE XLVI.

MR. WORTHY AND FAMILY, MR. LOVEGOOD AND HENRY LITTLEWORTH.

PRISON MEDITATIONS CONTINUED.

AFTER having given the present roomfull of company time to recruit their spirits, the recommencement of the same dialogue may not be unacceptable to the reader.

Wor. As I suppose you have given us the substance of what occurred upon your first visit to the prison, we shall be glad to hear what took place afterwards.

Loveg. Why, after concluding with prayer, we went to the inn, where we passed, or meant to pass, a serious retired evening among ourselves, in order that we might communicate to Mrs. Sparkish, all the instruction and advice, her situation seemed to require.

Hen. [To Mr. Lovegood.] But Sir, you should tell what passed at your introduction of family prayer, while you were at the inn.

Loveg. Oh no, Mr. Henry, you should let that pass.

Hen. I am sure Sir, it is a pity it should, for you know it was attended with a great blessing.

Wor. Come Mr. Henry, if Mr. Lovegood won't tell his own stories, you must tell them for him. His modesty at all times stands much in his way.

Hen. Why Sir, you must know, it soon began to be rumoured about who Mr. Lovegood was, as his preaching at Locksbury, and the conversion of Mrs.

Chipman, had made a considerable talk, even in those parts, which was, I suppose, the reason why the landlady of the inn, asked him, if they should not be favoured with a sermon, at any of the Churches belonging to their Town.

Loveg. Yes Sir, but you know that was entirely out of the question, as I was under the necessity of returning to attend to my own duty at home; and if not, I fear there was no probability of gaining admission into any of the pulpits in that town; for two of the ministers are constant attendants at the assembly-room, at the George inn, where we were; and one of them is said to be quite a vociferous bully: there is a third minister whose name is Primrose, who is a very decent character;—they say he is a distant relation of Dr. Orderly's, yet he is so far convinced that I preach *faith without works*, that I am quite out of his good graces also. However, by this event, I thought I had an opening to invite as many of the household as could attend to prayer; and they soon collected themselves together, and nearly filled the room; and an impressive time I must confess it was.

Wor. It is best to follow the scriptures, and “sow beside all waters:” but there is one text you do not take into sufficient consideration.

Loveg. What is that Sir!

Wor. “Be instant—*Out of season.*”

Loveg. Oh Sir! I am not Mr. Slapdash.

Wor. Ah, but you are Mr. Lovegood, and we shall never be ashamed of you.

Hen. I am sure there was no occasion to be ashamed of our Minister on that night, nor the two nights afterwards. [To Mr. Lovegood.] You know, Sir, what a blessing went with every word you spoke, and with every prayer you offered up.

Loveg. Oh, Mr. Henry! you did not use me well on that occasion.

Wor. What have you done, Mr. Henry?

Hen. Why Sir, what I could not help. The land-

lord's eldest son was so impressed with what Mr. Lovegood said at family prayer, that I verily believe God has sent a signal blessing home to his heart. And after having received so much good himself, no wonder that he was desirous that others should enjoy the same; and after he had mentioned his wish very earnestly to me, that he might invite some of his friends and companions to hear Mr. Lovegood, I told him I thought there could be no sort of harm in it.

Wor. No more there could Mr. Henry; and I hope you and the young man together, got Mr. Lovegood a good congregation.

Hen. Why really, Sir, the parlour in which we were, was so full, that it could not hold all who were willing to attend, and I had the greatest difficulty in the world, to persuade Mr. Lovegood to adjourn into the assembly-room.

Wor. [To Lovegood.] And could you have suffered a set of poor sinners "perishing for lack of knowledge," to have gone away without the word of life, while they were so eager to attend it?

Hen. I believe, Sir, our Minister would have run out of town, if he possibly could.

Wor. If he had, I think I should have sent him back again by force of arms.

Loveg. Sir, I was never taken to, in such a manner in all my life.

Wor. I am glad of it, you will get no pity from me; I hope you had double the congregation the last night before you left town.

Loveg. Why Sir, I am quite ashamed of myself.

Wor. Ashamed of yourself!—What for? If you had been *dancing* in the assembly-room, instead of *preaching* in it, we should all have been ashamed of you too.

Loveg. O Sir! you should not call it preaching.

Wor. I hope it was something very like it. For if you had got upon a table, and taken a text, as you do in Brookfield Church, who would have been the

most inconsistent, the Minister; (though I hate to give them the name, when applied to such characters,) who is jigging and dancing about, with all the frothy, vain people in the town; or the Minister, who takes a similar opportunity to preach among his fellow sinners, "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ?" And so the apostles acted, when they preached among the Heathens; and you have frequently told us, how nearly allied the Heathens in ancient times, were to the nominal professors of Christianity in the present day, who scarcely hold the form of godliness, while they not only totally deny, but even ridicule the power. [To Henry.] But Mr. Henry, if Mr. Lovegood is so much ashamed to tell of all *his wicked ways*, during his absence, I must request you to tell them for him.

Hen. Sir, the last meeting in the assembly-room—

[Mrs. Worthy interrupts, to Mr. Lovegood.] Sir, whenever you choose to call on me upon a similar occasion, I'll go with you, and we won't mind what people say about our going together to the assembly with such a design, and in such company;—but Mr. Henry, we must not interrupt you in telling us about your last meeting at the assembly-room.

Hen. Madam, the people crowded in so fast, as that our Minister was almost like Jonah in the city of Nineveh, ready "to fly from the presence of the Lord." I told him, as the providence of God had directed him there, and as the same divine providence had sent the people to hear, and all entirely without his own seeking, that he might resist a call which God might have designed for the eternal salvation of many souls; and I never heard our dear Minister so much at liberty in his blessed work before. It is astonishing how his whole soul was led out after them, while he was pressing upon them the necessity of seeking for salvation by Jesus Christ: and when he came to pray for the condemned prisoners, (for as we had heard nothing from Mr. Lovely, we began to conclude they would all suffer on the

next day,) it is astonishing how the whole multitude were melted into tears.

Wor. Though he preached upon such an unconsecrated spot! yet I dare say an abundance of good was done.

Hen. Sir, a gentleman and a lady who were guests at the house on that night, were very much affected indeed: they afterwards called me into their room, and I had a deal of conversation with them, upon the very serious and important subjects which Mr. Lovegood had been delivering among us: besides, we picked up a very excellent acquaintance there.—The dissenting Minister, who lives at that town, was one of Mr. Lovegood's hearers, on the last evening of our meeting, and a very worthy, serious, good man, he seems to be. He came in afterwards, and passed the rest of the evening with us. Some people however, got hold of this, and said, this was a full proof that Mr. Lovegood was *nothing better than a Presbyterian in heart.*

Loveg. I wish they had just such pious ministers as I believe he is, in every Church in the Town. But while dissenters are at liberty to provide for themselves whatever ministers they choose, who are pious and good, many of the Churches are left to be supplied with those who are dissolute and profane, no wonder, under such circumstances, that matters are frequently so bad with us.

Hen. Well Sir, you know it is quite as it should be, respecting that worthy Minister: we were told with what a deal of diligence and attention, he goes about preaching and exhorting from village to village, and how much good he does, not only by his preaching, but by his exemplary conduct wherever he goes. But Sir, you cannot conceive what a state of perplexity our Minister was in by a letter he received from the Minister of the Parish, in which the George Inn stands, after Mr. Lovegood had finished his last meeting in the assembly-room.

Wor. (To Mr. Lovegood.) Dear Sir, I should be glad to see it, if you have it with you.

Loveg. (handing the letter.) Sir, you are very welcome, it is a strange production! (The letter is read.)

Rev. Sir,

I hear, that you have had the audacity to fly in the face of all decency and order, by making your *ranting extemporaneous preachments* in the assembly-room in this town, which stands in my Parish. Sir, I charge you to desist coming into this Town on the same errand any more, or I will send you a citation from the Spiritual court. Sir, I hear you are come after some of your followers, who are to be hanged to-morrow, and no wonder at it, for I am told, by Mr. Primrose, one of the Ministers in this Town, that you preach *faith without works*, excepting when you are *ranting upon inspiration*.

I am, Sir, and I will soon give you to know who I am,

JOHN BELLWEATHER.

Wor. Well, well, Sir, you have very little to fear from such letter-writers as these: if they were to send their citations after those of the Clergy, who can follow up their midnight revellings and dancings from time to time in these assembly-rooms, it would be much more to the purpose, than to talk of citations for those who use them, for the praise worthy purpose of the service of God.

Hen. Why, they say, that that Minister is very little better than a common bully, and that when he is at the assembly, calling after the waiter for more wine, or cards, or what they may want, he has a voice like a town bull; but when he is in the pulpit, he mutters over his sermons in such a miserable, low, mumbling voice, that nobody can hear him. "Like a humble-bee in a pitcher," as my good old father used to say.

Wor. Ah! his heart goes with his words, while he

is roaring in the assembly-room ; but when he gets into the pulpit, he leaves his heart behind him.

Mrs. Wor. [To Mr. Lovegood.] But do Sir, let us now hear what was the result of your second visit to the gaol.—You mentioned nothing about Sam Blood.

Loveg. Oh, Madam ! the poor creature was a malignant, bitter, hard-hearted papist ; and cried, All the world should not make him change his religion, and die a heretic.—He would not hear a word we said ; but when we prayed, got from us as far as he could : I suppose by the command of his Priest.

Wor. Oh the horrid delusion that others, besides papists, are under ! Who can deceive themselves by a superstitious confidence, in mere forms and modes, independent of every principle of inward and personal holiness, so essential to the salvation of the soul !—But I hope you found the other poor prisoners, on this second visit, in a better frame of mind.

Loveg. Really Sir, I have some hope of poor William Frolic ; he not only could speak of the *outward* wickedness of his conduct, but he had also a deal to say against the *inward* depravity of his heart.

Hen. Several things that he said to me, affected me very much. After Mr. Lovegood had given them a most solemn exhortation and prayer, taking some hints from what our dear minister said, he thus exclaimed : “ And must this horrid tongue of mine, which has been so ready to utter so much blasphemous, filthy, and lying conversation : and never thought of uttering one word of prayer, till I had brought myself to the very door of death by my crimes, after one day more, never be allowed to speak again ? And must these eyes, that have been the inlet of every evil, and my guide to seek after a thousand wicked devices, be so soon sealed up in eternal darkness and death ? And must these hands—Oh ! these thievish hands, and hateful feet, what have they been at ? O what a wretch ! what a filthy and abominable wretch ! body, soul, and spirit !—And must I in a few hours, stand before that God,

whom I have insulted all the days of my life?"——
Poor creature, it made my heart bleed to hear how he exclaimed against himself.

Loveg. I confess I had not half the hope from what Edward Sparkish said ; for he talked, amidst all his occasional exclamations against himself, that he *repented as well as he could*, that he *said his prayers as well as he could* ; and he would do all in his power to receive the sacrament *worthily*, the morning before he died : and that when the minister pronounced the absolution, he would believe in it with all his heart, and that he trusted God would forgive him, as he was sure from his heart, he forgave every body else.

Wor. Why he seemed to have darker conceptions how fallen sinners are to be saved, than he had the day before.

Loveg. Oh Sir, I found that the ordinary of the gaol was Mr. Primrose, who though an orderly, decent man, and well-intentioned, was very ignorant of the gospel way of salvation ; and he had been putting a book into his hands, quite in the pharisaic, proud, free-will style, as though by a certain process of repenting, praying, receiving the sacrament, forgiving his enemies, all of which he conceived to be within his own reach, he was to be saved ; instead of his being brought to cry out, in the name of Christ, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And yet at other times, he would speak in very humiliating language, against his sinful life, and sinful ways ; in short, he appeared quite inconsistent with himself ; but his pharisaic hope on himself, gives me but little reason to believe that his repentance is genuine and sincere.

Hen. Well, I hope that William Frolic is better taught ; when he heard Edward Sparkish speak in that manner, he cried : "As to myself, how can I dare to trust in any thing I say or do ? As it respects my prayers, I question if ever I should have prayed at all, if I had not the halter nearly about my neck, and these irons on my legs, the just reward of my

hateful ways : so in regard to my repentance, even the very devils have that, and are none the better for it ; and I fear, lest my repentance should be no better than theirs. And as to my prayers, what right have I to call them prayers, while I never thought of prayer, till after I was cast into prison, and condemned to die.

Wor. I think if the repentance of either of these two unhappy youths, should prove to be genuine, it will be evidenced on the side of William Frolic— But can you tell us of any conversation, which further took place?

Hen. Why Sir, the personal conversation did not last long on that morning, as the goaler seemed very desirous that Mr. Lovegood should give an exhortation and prayer, to all the wretched objects of his charge : and the ordinary was to be there by twelve o'clock, and after that time, it is not the custom to admit strangers to visit the prisoners who are condemned to die. But I must add this, that many of the prisoners seemed very much affected : and one poor youth, who was in prison for debt, came to Mr. Lovegood, begging a portion of his prayers, in very humble and broken language indeed. And the gaoler's wife seemed very much struck, while she mentioned the formal uninteresting manner in which the ordinary performed his office, and what a different effect the style and spirit of Mr. Lovegood's exhortations and prayers, had upon the prisoners at large. And before we left the gaol, it is amazing how very earnest all the poor creatures were with us, to repeat our visit to them on the morrow, and especially William Frolic and Edward Sparkish, who begged we would not leave them, till we saw them launched into the eternal world.

Wor. It seems then at that time, you had heard nothing of Mr. Lovely?

Loveg. No, nor for some hours afterwards : we had many apprehensions that somewhat must have happened to have prevented the success of the journey ;

but before we had dismissed the people in the evening of the day, from the assembly-room, he joined the company, though I did not see him till they were nearly all dismissed. We perceived immediately, by his cheerful looks, that his journey had been attended with the desired effect.

Wor. What could be the cause why he came so late : had he any difficulty with the Judge, in procuring a pardon for them ?

Loveg. Not the least. The Judge thanked him very kindly, and expressed how glad he was to hear of these lenient circumstances, which did not appear upon the trial, so as that he could with any degree of consistency spare the lives of at least, two of the malefactors : and then he told me after he had been with the Judge, as he had so much time before him, he could not rest contented till he had given a call on his dearest Ann, as it was but five miles round : and then when he set off very early in the morning, he had the misfortune to break the axletree of his carriage, coming over that terrible rough place, Starvington Forest, a few miles from Grediton, where he was quite at a distance from any help, so that he was afraid he should have been obliged to have walked to us on foot, in order that he might be in time enough to bring the pardon, before the fatal moment arrived.

Mrs. Wor. Was Mrs. Sparkish in the room when Mr. Lovely first arrived ?

Loveg. Oh no Madam, she was up in her chamber, with her eyes red with tears, and her heart ready to break with grief, being now fully apprehensive that her son would suffer on the morrow.

Mrs. Wor. Poor woman, what she must have felt, when she heard that a message of mercy was arrived at last ! how did you break it to her ?

Loveg. Why Madam, when we were consulting the best way of telling her the good news by degrees, we found that Mr. Lovely's servant had been whispering it about the house, that his Master had obtained a pardon for two of the prisoners. It seems it was

the chamber-maid that went and told her of the report. Immediately she flew out of her chamber, came into the room in which we were, and under the greatest ecstasy of mind, fell down at Mr. Lovely's feet, crying, "O tell me, tell me! are the good news true? Is my dear child to live?" Dear Mr. Lovely was so affected for a while, that he could scarcely speak; after a second attempt, he cried: "Yes, your son is permitted to live; I have his pardon in my possession: and life has been granted to William Frolic also!" Immediately the agitation of her mind was so great, that she fell into strong hysterics, and could say nothing for a considerable time. Directly as she began to recover, her cry was, "O let me go this moment to the prison, and tell my dear child that he is yet to live!"

Wor. It would have been very improper to have suffered her to have carried the glad tidings to her son in so abrupt a manner.—How did you manage matters?

Loveg. Sir, we told her that as it was then so late, that her gaining admission might not only be attended with much difficulty, but that the surprise might be too powerful for her son, as it had been for her, unless it were opened to them by degrees, as there have been instances of sudden joy, being the cause of sudden death. After some further persuasions, that she would be calm and composed, as her son's life would certainly be saved, we entreated her to be at rest, till the next morning: and that for the present we would only send a line to the gaoler, informing him that he might give the two prisoners, Sparkish and Frolic, a distant hint that their lives might yet be saved.

Wor. Certainly this was the best plan, to guard against the too powerful effects of sudden surprise. I suppose you made an early visit on the next morning to confirm the good news.

Loveg. Why Sir, we were informed the night before, that we could not well be admitted till after nine

o'clock, as the ordinary was to be there before, as they expressed it, *to prepare them for death*; so that we thought the hint already sent to them, might be quite sufficient, without being followed up by another till we were admitted to see them. But when we came there, we found that the gaoler had concluded, he had not sufficient warrant to give them the hint we had transmitted to him. And Oh, what a distressing scene was immediately presented before us! The halters thrown upon the table, the executioner ready to pinion their arms, and tie their hands; the blacksmith at hand to saw off their irons, three coffins piled on each other to be conveyed with them in the cart, to receive their dead bodies after the execution, while the under sheriff and a heap of constables, were getting ready below stairs, to receive their charge; and crowds of spectators were beginning to assemble, to see them conducted near a mile out of Town, to the fatal tree. However, after we had called the under sheriff and the gaoler aside, and given them the respite, they came with us into the room; though we requested they would leave it with us to tell them the news, by cautious and slow degrees.

Mrs. Wor. What must Mrs. Sparkish have felt!—how could she contain herself!

Loveg. Madam, we insisted upon it that she should not be admitted into the room till after we had made known to the young men, that their lives were to be spared: being satisfied, that from the agitated state of her mind, she could have no command over herself; besides, it was my design to try to make some improvement on these events, while I told them of the merciful dispensation of those providential occurrences, whereby their lives were still preserved.

Hen. In all my life, I never saw such an affecting scene.

Mrs. Wor. [To Mrs. Merryman.] My dear, I perceive you are much affected.—Won't the story be too much for you?

Mrs. Mer. Oh no : I can bear to hear of any thing, but the loss of my dear husband.

Wor. [To Mr. Lovegood.] Let us now hear how you introduced the subject.

Loveg. Sir, as soon as Mr. Lovely, Henry, and I, were conducted into the room, by the gaoler and under sheriff, I gave each of them my hand, called them my fellow sinners, and begged them to pray for mercy ; they both of them accepted it, and wept plentifully ; while Sam Blood, as usual, retired to a corner of the room with his priest. As to William Frolic, when I gave him my hand, he kissed it and quite bedewed it with tears.—Poor fellow ! I really hope his heart has received a wound under a sense of the evil of sin, which none but Christ can heal.

Hen. Sir, you spoke with so much affection and tenderness, that it was enough to draw tears out of a flint ; for all the poor prisoners, and especially the gaoler's wife, were so overcome, that there was nothing but sighing and sobbing throughout the room, while you were enforcing Christ's ability, to save to the uttermost. And as to Mr. Lovely, dear creature —[Here Henry could scarcely proceed.]

Wor. Mr. Henry, if you cant continue the story, let Mr. Lovegood try and tell the rest of it.

Loveg. Sir, I next drew a parable for these poor criminals :—I asked them, that if a hope could exist, that some kind friend unknown, unsolicited by them, should out of the mere good will of his affectionate mind, have taken up their ruined cause, and sought their pardon, and obtained it, would they not love such a friend ? Frolic immediately cried—"Love him, how could they do otherwise !" Then said I, remember the grace and mercy of God our Saviour, who came down from his Father's glory, purchased our pardon at the expense of his most precious blood, when we were sinking into ruin, and sentenced to everlasting death ; ought you not to love such a friend as this, and to commit your ruined souls into such a

dear Redeemer's hands? Poor Frolic immediately addressed young Sparkish.—“Though it is now too late to expect such a friend on earth, yet may too such most miserable sinners, find out a friend in Christ or else within less than three hours longer, we shall be ruined souls to all eternity!” I then looked at them both and said, What then are you both sure that your lives cannot be saved? and that no such friend has interfered to obtain a pardon for you, however desperate your state may appear? Immediately they caught my eye, and cried, “What, is it possible! can there be a hope!” The eager and affectionate Mr. Lovely cried, “Oh! tell them—tell them there is a hope!”

Mrs. Wor. Oh! what an affecting scene this must have been!

Loveg. Madam, it was impossible that any thing could have been more affecting: they were both so overcome with such astonishment and surprise, as that they fell down upon their knees, as though they had been iron. Immediately we took the opportunity to kneel down with them, and prayed that their spared lives, though deservedly forfeited, yet now mercifully preserved, might be dedicated to God's future praise and glory.

Mrs. Wor. O how delightful that dear man, Mr. Lovely, must have been in their sight! by whose kind interposition, their lives were spared, especially at that very moment when they had given up all for lost.

Loveg. After prayer Madam, the Sheriff showed them the respite, and I pointed them to Mr. Lovely, and said, There stands that most tender-hearted, though unknown friend of yours, by whose merciful solicitations your lives are spared, just as you were going to be led as victims of justice to the place of execution. Their eyes were immediately fixed upon him: they stood for a while motionless, like statues, till tears of gratitude began to run down their cheeks,

intermixed with several broken expressions, arising from the most grateful sensations of their hearts; while dear Mr. Lovely was quite as much affected as the prisoners themselves. Just then Mrs. Sparkish knocked at the door, and would rather abruptly enter the room, that she might congratulate her son on this, not less merciful, than unexpected event. She flew directly to him, embraced him, and cried, "Oh my child!" they wept together for a considerable time. In short, we were all so affected, that immediately a very impressive silence took place.

Wor. No wonder that you were all so exceedingly overcome.—How could you proceed?

Loveg. Sir, at length I mustered together all the spirits I had left, and gave them a short exhortation on the evil tendency of a corrupted heart, and its horrid effects, unrestrained by grace; cautioning them, lest the same vicious principle should, after a while, prompt them to a similar practice to their eternal ruin, both of body and soul.

After this the keeper requested of me, that I would give an address to the rest of the prisoners, and while I was about to offer up another prayer, the under sheriff, with great civility said, "Sir, I am sorry to interrupt you, but according to my office, it is necessary that I should be punctual to the time." And directly the executioner was ordered to proceed. Sam Blood, at that time, was walking about with his priest, perfectly inattentive to all that passed with us, muttering their prayers, and crossing themselves, after their superstitious customs; even while we were at prayer, they would behave with equal inattention and disrespect. And when the sheriff came to address the priest, telling him that the time was now come, he said, "Sir, Mr. Blood is now perfectly prepared for death, according to the rules of the Catholic Church;" and while the executioner was taking the cord to bind his arms and hands together, the under sheriff caught the opportunity to say to him, "that he hoped he confessed that his

sentence was just; he abruptly answered, "I have confessed all I shall confess, to the priest, and that is enough;" and when he further said, "I hope you are a true penitent for all your past offences!" his answer was, "I have *done penance*, according to the rules of the only true church, and am determined to die in that faith. If I had turned heretic, I suppose I should have been pardoned as well as the rest."

Grieved at his ignorance, I attempted to speak to him, for the last time, though I made two efforts before, but he always walked off sulky and reserved. —The priest immediately interrupted me; and with a considerable degree of sharpness and acrimony, gave me to understand, that it is unlawful for their people, to hear any thing from those who are of the protestant religion; or to hold any argument with them, which they conceived to be heretical, as being contrary to the faith of the infallible Catholic Church.

Wor. In what a dreadful state of mind this poor fellow went into the eternal world!

Loveg. Oh, Sir! it could not be worse. Soon afterwards he was conducted by the under sheriff and the executioner into the cart; his coffin being sent before him down stairs, and his priest went with him to the place of execution. He left the prison apparently quite hardened and sullen. And as we stopt this morning in town, a little time after the execution, by report, we have every reason to fear, that he died in the same horrid state of mind, in which he had lived all the days of his life.

Wor. And yet he conceived that he would be safe, because he had one of their priests at his elbow, and that he died a papist.

Loveg. Had he been a Mahomedan, a Jew, or any thing but a Papist, I might have been able to have got at him: but such is the subtilty and craft of these Romish priests, that they shut up the people's minds from all instruction, but what they choose to administer themselves, and send them thus deluded, and unconverted from sin, with a rotten confidence in their

priestly power, to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.*

Wor. But what became of the ordinary all this time?

Loveg. Sir, you remember I told you before, that he had done his duty, as it is called, in the former part of the morning; and it was his design to have conducted them to the place of execution, but having been informed of the respite, he did not suppose it was necessary for him to attend any further: he is a very decent young man, but he wants the candour of the worthy Dr. Orderly.

Wor. Did you stop long after Sam Blood was carried to execution?

Loveg. Oh Sir, we should have been glad if time would but have allowed us to have stopped longer still. I was highly pleased at what William Frolic said, after all his present fear of death was over.

Mrs. Wor. You really think then, that his mind has been much softened by these events?

Loveg. I hope so Madam; but I have long learnt, not to draw hasty conclusions from appearances of this sort; yet he really seemed to be more anxious that I should pray for the conversion of his heart, after he had heard the good news of his pardon, than he was before; and as he said he could expect nothing less than to be transported, and that he well deserved it, yet that wherever he went, if he took the same evil heart with him, he should be liable to fall into the same evil ways, all the world over.

Hen. And Sir, it was very affecting to me, to hear him confess how ill he had treated my poor Sister, almost ever since she has been his wife; and how concerned he was at what my dear aged Father and Mother must have felt, since he has been connected with our family. He really wept more then, than at

* Though I am satisfied this no more than a just representation of the sad effects of popery upon the human mind, yet I by no means conclude that all papists are equally vitiated and corrupted, by that system they unhappily profess.

any time before, when he begged me to take home his most humble acknowledgments for all his past cruel conduct and misbehaviour; and that as he could not come and see any of them, he begged that they might come and see him, before he was sent abroad, that he might ask their pardon upon his bended knees; and as to his wife, it were too much to expect that she would go with him into transportation, at least, not till he had given some evidence, that his heart was truly changed, so as that she might depend upon this, that he would never treat her as he had done; and that while he suffered for his crimes, he would do all in his power to make her happy in her settlement in those parts, and that then he should be away from all such companions as had formerly drawn him aside.

Loveg. Yes, and then he cried, which pleased me most of all, "but none of these resolutions will ever do, if God does not change my heart;" adding, "Oh Mr. Lovegood! pray, pray, above all things, that God would change my heart!"

Wor. One would hope that he could not have expressed himself in such language, without somewhat of the grace of God. But how did Ned Sparkish appear?

Loveg. Why sir, he could make a number of vows and resolutions, but he soon began asking his Mother about different people in the neighbourhood; and that as he was now to live, he should want some fresh clothes while he was in gaol. I am greatly afraid that all his repentance will evaporate with his fears.

Hen. Ah Sir! but that which affected us as much as any thing before, was what Mr. Lovely did.

Wor. Whatever he does is done so much like himself, that I beg we may hear it.

Loveg. [Takes out his watch.] Oh Sir, it is past eight o'clock, I must hasten home: what will Mrs. Lovegood think of me?

Wor. Can't you stop a quarter of an hour longer,

and tell the rest of your story? Mrs. Lovegood knows you are in good hands.

Loveg. Oh Sir, I begin exceedingly to want retirement, after so much fatigue of body and mind; especially as it is Saturday evening.

Wor. Well Sir, we would not press upon your spirits, or your time; we'll wait till Monday, when you always come to see us. I wish you would bring Mrs. Lovegood and the children oftener than you do.

Loveg. My good Mary is frequently obliged to act a Martha's part; and children are apt to be troublesome guests.

Wor. Perhaps Mr. Henry, after you have seen your Father, you may have something more to communicate respecting William Frolic; if so, we shall be glad to see you at the same time.

Hen. Somehow Sir, it seems quite impertinent in me, to come so often to your house; though you are so condescending to invite me.

Mrs. Wor. And Mr. Henry, let me also invite your wife to attend you: you have married into a very worthy family.

Hen. Indeed I have Madam, and have reason to thank God for it. Mr. and Mrs. Considerate are very excellent people.

Wor. Mr. Henry, as I like to have my friends about me, I beg that you will request them to be of the party.

Hen. Sir, as they generally come by our house, down the hill from Mapleton to Brookfield Church, I will tell them of your kind invitation. I dare say they will be very happy to accept it.

Mrs. Mer. Let me request also, that dear old Mr. Littleworth may be one of the party.—How my dear husband delighted to talk with him, and to talk about him!

Hen. Oh Madam, his want of education always keeps him back from such invitations.

Mrs. Wor. I beg you will bring him. We are

charmed at the plain, unaffected simplicity of his manners : it is quite a treat to us.

Hen. Madam, I will tell him of your kind invitation, but we cannot well be both absent from the farm at the same time, about this season of the year.

Loveg. Come Mr. Henry, we must be going, and as we walk together through the park, I am ready to attend you. [They all depart till Monday.]

DIALOGUE XLVII.

MR. LOVEGOOD; MR. AND MRS. WORTHY; MRS. MERRYMAN
MR. AND MRS. CONSIDERATE; AND FARMER
LITTLEWORTH.

BENEVOLENCE TRIUMPHANT.

THE writer of these dialogues, begs to apologise for his old and useful friend, Thomas Newman, who first introduced himself into his imagination; as it respects his fears, a little selfish I confess, lest Mr. Lovegood should be made the Archbishop of Canterbury.* His mind was perfectly correct; his ideas of the distribution of such high ecclesiastical preferments, were not only as honourable to the state, as they were respectful to the characters who should be promoted to receive them.

Who then can presume to cast a second smile on the simple supposition, as it originated with this honest peasant, that such a man as Mr. Lovegood should be thus preferred:—a Minister so truly pious and devoted to God; with so much judgment and wisdom; with so much purity and integrity; with so much simplicity and godly sincerity: so completely delivered from all the fleshly wisdom of the world; who could address a country congregation with such lovely familiarity, and yet with such solemn dignity, so as to make the wisest to wonder, and the most unlettered to understand; who could reason, alarm, allure, as the subject required: in short, who had no fault but his over-modesty; while at the same time, he was possessed of every ability, capable of

* See Dialogue II.

rendering him truly splendid and great. At one time a Paul in argument; then an Apollos in eloquence; next a Peter in bold simplicity; and at other times, not less a John in child-like familiarity; on the one hand, when the language of a Boanerges was necessary; such a son of thunder was he, that his auditory would stand trembling before him, struck with astonishment and holy awe; and when the balmy language of a Barnabas was required, he proved such a son of consolation also, as that no man living was better qualified to bind up the broken hearted, with so much tenderness and love.

Notwithstanding Thomas Newman's selfishness, who would not wish for at least episcopal honours, on behalf of such a man of God as this?—Happy therefore, shall I be, if this slight sketch of a character so great and good, might be the means of making known his excellent worth, so as that he may be called to fill the next vacant Bishopric, whether great or small; and long in that situation may he live, to lay his hallowed hands, on many wise heads, with upright hearts, who shall prove themselves “workmen that need not be ashamed,” to the honour and credit of the established Church, and to the salvation of thousands, who love to worship within her sacred walls.

One circumstance I acknowledge, I fear may operate against such high preferment, being conferred on such a man, however eminent and good. It must be observed, that he rather made a breach in his accustomed ecclesiastical good manners, while by the imperious command of a hungry starving company of sinners, he was compelled to make use of an assembly-room, when it was not in his power to procure a Church. What could he do, what must others of the regular Clergy do under the like devotedness of spirit, under the same fervent desire for the salvation of souls? Let charity under the like feelings plead their cause, before a contracted spirit, pre-mies to condemn.

♦

Doubtless the Rev. Mr. Bellweather will make known the crimes of this ecclesiastical delinquent, far and wide; let envy, like the serpent, lick the file, as long as its envenomed tongue can last. Mr. Lovegood is still the same, while his very faults prove his fitness for the episcopal office. Give him but a Bishopric, and he can command all the Churches in his diocese at his will: he wants but scope equal to his wisdom and zeal, and then he will act regularly in course; and under such a call, at least as I conjecture, may we not ask the question, where shall we find the Bishop upon earth, however warmed by his indefatigable zeal; though like Bishop Jewel, who wished to die preaching; who shall outshine the character of Bishop Lovegood, in his unwearied labours for the salvation of souls? Oh that such heavenly-minded men, may never be wanted to fill that sacred office in our British Sion! then shall the Church be blessed indeed, while men, so truly great and good, shall be made the instruments of conferring the solemn character on others also, not less diligent and devoted than the renowned, though retired, vicar of Lower Brookfield himself.

Sorry am I, that my kind readers have now to be in the company of this excellent servant of God for the last time. That the lovely peasant, Thomas Newman, that the simple-hearted Farmer Littleworth, his truly converted son Henry, his worthy sister Nancy, Mrs. Traffic, and their family, the judicious Mr. Considerate, and his family, the plain and honest Mr. Steadyman, the truly catholic and mild-spirited dissenting minister, Mr. Peaceful, the deeply wounded, and contrite Mrs. Chipman, the serious and reflecting Mr. Reader, the most amiable and delightful Mr. and Mrs. Lovely, the pleasant and lively Mr. Merryman, and the very admirable and respectable family of the Worthys—sorry I am to say, that after this last dialogue, they are to appear no more. And let such characters, held forth

as a warning, which have been brought forward as a contrast to their excellent qualifications, vanish from our imaginations without regret.

And should the writer of these dialogues have so conducted himself, as that he can be followed by his readers, even to the last page of the publication, without a nod; while they are read as an evening's entertainment, even to a late hour, he shall not regret the many late hours he also has spent, in prosecuting the work; and especially if any of his dear readers, should be brought near to God thereby.

The general invitations given at the conclusion of the last dialogue, brought, on the Monday, to the family repast of the hospitable Mr. Worthy, the following guests: Mr. Lovegood, Mr. and Mrs. Considerate, and Farmer Littleworth. After the accustomed *how do you do* salutations, the good old farmer thus began.

Far. An't please your honour, my dear child Harry, did insist upon it that I should come to-day, agreeably to your honour's invitation, and that he would stay at home at this busy time, to mind the farm, especially as my poor daughter has got a letter from her husband, which old Nelly Trot brought from the post-office to our house yesterday, after we returned from Brookfield Church;—and I should be very glad of a little of your honour's good advice upon the subject. Poor fellow! he writes in a very humble style. What a mercy it will be, if the Lord brings about the salvation of his soul, by these sore afflictions!

[The farmer gives Mr. Worthy the letter.]

For. Mr. Littleworth, would you wish me to read it out?

Far. Oh yes Sir, I should like that Mr. Considerate, and our Minister may hear it, that we may all consult together. [The letter is read to the company.]

“MY DEAR WIFE,

“You must have heard from your brother Henry, how my wicked and unworthy life has been preserved, by that worthy gentleman, Mr. Lovely, the high-sheriff who brought us a pardon from the Judge, just when we were all ordered to prepare for death. What a merciful man Mr. Lovely has proved himself to be! And as to Mr. Lovegood, oh that I had not despised him as I have done! for I am sure in despising such men, I have been setting at naught my own good, all my days. I now see and feel it was through the most vile wickedness of my heart, that the whole of my life has been so abominably profane. What Mr. Lovegood preaches from the pulpit, I now know must be true; and the faith of his preaching has been so set before us in the wonderful change that has appeared on your Father, your Brother, and your Sister Nancy, as should shame us, while we cannot but admire what the grace of God has wrought on them.

Oh! my dear Patty, let me entreat you no longer to be regardless of what your good old father has to say. Do not grieve his heart, do not send him any more, as we have often done, with tears of sorrow to his bed, by neglecting family prayer, and by despising his good advice. I know he was right, and that we were wrong; tell him I beg his pardon in the most humble manner, for all that I have done to grieve him; beg your aged mother also to forgive me, and your brother to pray for me. Oh, what a happy life he has led, since God has changed his heart! and how comfortable he and his wife live together!—and we might have been quite as happy as they, if it had not been through our own wicked natures, whereby we have been living in such perpetual and shameful neglect, of all the ways of a holy life.—It was on this account, my dear wife, that I so frequently used you cruelly, and with so much unkind neglect; while I had to run after every abominable evil, far and wide: But now I most humbly request your forgiveness for

what is passed. And oh ! that God would change both your heart and mine, that if we are permitted to live together again, we may live to see better days than ever we have seen yet.

Though my life has been spared, yet my circumstances are ruined by my folly. Transportation, I confess, I well deserve : and as to myself, I had rather be sent abroad, if I work as a slave, that I may get out of the reach of my wicked companions, lest I should be drawn into sin again, by those who can never cease from sin, till God shall change their hearts.

Now my dear wife, I would not wish to be so cruel as to desire you to go into banishment with me, unless I had some hope that God has so far given me to abhor my past life, so as, that I shall not be permitted to return into my old ways of sin again.

I am ashamed to desire you to consult with your father, how far he would advise you to this step ; no wonder if he should at once determine that you never should go with such an abominable wretch as I have been : nor will I ask it, but as during my future continuance in this land, I should give evidence that my repentance is sincere. But remember my dear Patty, that you are my wife ; and that if God, in great mercy, should bless us both with his converting grace, as it is with your brother Henry and his wife, so you and I shall be happy wherever we may be sent.

I have only one request further to make to you, my dear wife ; I beseech you at all times, to go with your worthy father to Brookfield Church : do not let your sister Polly keep you back ; her laughing and scoffing at religion, did me a deal of harm. Surely dear Mr. Lovegood is one of the best men that ever lived, his exhortations and prayers among the poor prisoners will never be forgotten : he appeared more like an angel than a man. [Here Mr. Lovegood cried, I cannot stand all this, and was going to leave the room ; Mr. Worthy stopt him by saying, there was scarce a line more about him, as the letter was just

finished;] and by all accounts of his preaching in the assembly room, it had such an effect upon the people of the town, as never was known before; and they are very much grieved that all the Clergy did not ask him to preach in their churches, but I fear it was their wicked envy that prevented them, while the bad lives of too many of the Clergy, greatly hardened me in my wicked ways.

Present him with my most dutiful respects; tell him I hope I shall never forget his good advice, to the day of my death; and believe me to be, my dear wife, though once your very cruel, yet now, I trust,

Your truly penitent

And affectionate husband,

WILLIAM FROLIC.

Wor. Really Sir, I should hope that the grace of God has reached the young man's heart after all.—He confesses himself in language very becoming his situation.

Far. Oh Sir! I hope the Lord in mercy has met with him at last. It cost me many a tear before I could read his letter through: to be sure, there is a wonderful difference in the wild *blade*; nothing is too hard for the Lord. But I don't know what to say about my daughter's going with him into transportation: my poor wife is *desperately* afraid, lest he should turn back again into his old ways, and then the poor girl would be miserable, all the days of her life.

Consid. Very true Mr. Littleworth; I would by no means determine upon any thing hastily. He has had enough to make him penitent for a while. If his repentance be genuine, it will be evidenced by his "bringing forth fruits, meet for repentance;" but I think much should depend upon the feelings of your daughter's own mind.

Far. Why, I believe the poor silly girl loved him very much, and that was the cause of all her troubles; and she would be willing to go with him, if she

could thoroughly depend upon it, that he is an altered man.

Consid. Under such circumstances, I would advise your daughter, by all means, to go with him : I think their separation from each other, might be attended with bad consequences. Besides, what is the way of duty ? they are united for life ; we have no right even to propose a separation, while they are willing to continue in connexion with each other : and from his present broken and contrite state of mind, we have much reason to hope that his repentance may be sincere ; and if God in mercy does the same for her, they will be happy all the world over.

Far. Though I should be sorry to have my daughter so far from home, if she has not been the child I could have wished, yet I know that he will be in much less danger, if he were to be sent abroad, than if he were to continue within the reach of his rakish companions about home ; and he says the same in his letter to Patty.

Wor. But his staying in this country is quite out of the question : thank God, that his life has been spared ; and what justice still demands, he well deserves : there is nothing left but that we do our best for him, till he is sent abroad, and by that time we shall better understand the real state of his mind, and shall be able to determine, how far it may be advisable for your daughter to attend him, or not. [To Mr. Lovegood.] Come Sir, let us have a little of your advice on this occasion—what makes you so silent ?

Loveg. Oh Sir, what I only meant as private family service and prayer, I find by William Frolic's letter, is taken for public preaching all the town over : but if the people would come in, how could I prevent them ?

Wor. What are you frightened at Mr. Bellweather's letter ? are you afraid of a citation to the spiritual court ? or are you sorry you did so much good in the town ?

Loveg. Oh Sir ! I don't know what to say to it.

Consid. Sir, from your own good sense, you must be satisfied that mere places are all the same before the eternal God ; and that there is no difference where good is done, provided it be done, whether in a ball-room, or a play-house, a meeting-house, a cathedral, or a barn.

Far. As our dear Minister preached with such wonderful success in the assembly-room, he shall be heartily welcome to preach in the large hall of our old house ; and, if that won't hold the people, I have a *rare* large barn, that will hold half the Parish, for I am sure the generality of the people in our town, are in a *desperate* ignorant state ; and Thomas Newman will be clerk ; and pitch the tune, for he sings many a *brave* hymn while he is thrashing.

Loveg. Sir, do let us wave the present conversation ; we can hit upon a better subject.

Wor. What can be a better subject than the great good you did in preaching in the assembly-room ? I am sure it was holy ground then, if it never was so before, when God was pouring down such an abundant blessing upon the hearers. But what do you mean by a better subject ?

Loveg. Oh ! the endearing conduct of Mr. Lovely.

Wor. Yes, you promised to tell us more of this, when you were obliged to leave us on Saturday evening last.

Mrs. Wor. I remember you left us full of expectation about him ; I suppose it was some kind actions among the prisoners in the goal.

Loveg. Why Sir, while I was exhorting the prisoners, and praying with them, Mr. Lovely was very much struck with the young man I mentioned to you on Saturday, who was in prison for debt, and who seemed to be so much more affected than any of the rest. Immediately he made inquiry from the gaoler and others, respecting his circumstances : it seems his name was Hyde, and he discovered, that though he might have got forward in a profitable line of business, as a Currier, and was very decently educated,

yet from a degree of misconduct, which arose more from thoughtlessness, than intentional wickedness, and which had also laid him open to the villany of others, he was cast into prison by the cruelty of only one of his creditors, for a bond debt of a hundred pounds, and was thereby separated from his wife and four children, who were all obliged to live nearly a starving life, on a small jointure belonging to his wife's mother; and because she would not give up that to pay this mercenary creditor, he not only threw him into gaol, but was determined to keep him there, notwithstanding the rest of his creditors were willing to accept thirteen shillings in the pound, with a promise to pay all the rest, should it ever be in his power.

Wor. Well, and as times go, this was an honourable composition. No doubt but that such a story would immediately captivate the attention of the tender-hearted Mr. Lovely, especially if he saw the young man broken and penitent under the evil of sin. And how did Mr. Lovely proceed?

Loveg. After we took leave of the prisoners, who followed us with a thousand blessings, Mr. Lovely, on inquiry, found that this cruel voracious creditor, was possessed of a lease which his old uncle had purchased at a low rate, many years ago, which now only depended on one old infirm life. It seems the old miser was very fond of buying leases of this sort, if he could get them at a cheap rate, as he knew what their future advantages would be; and by a clause in his will, Mr. Lovely is prevented from renewing them, so that it is probable he will be twice as rich as his uncle was, notwithstanding his liberality, if he lives a few years longer.

Wor. Pray who was this hard hearted wretch?

Loveg. Sir, his name is Squeezer; his family, it seems, originally came from Grediton; he is a patent screw maker; and Mr. Lovely would insist upon it, that I should go with him immediately from the gaol to his house. He did not at first let him know who he was; only began after his mild style and

manner, to expostulate with him on the injustice of attempting to extort from a poor widow, her daughter and her children, that which in conscience he had no right to expect, or demand; and that he ought to accept the same compromise offered by the rest of the creditors. Supposing him to be some lawyer's clerk, that Mr. Hyde had sent to him, he began blustering about, asking what business it was of his? and declaring he would see him rot in gaol, unless he paid the whole of the debt, and the lawyer's expenses into the bargain. Immediately Mr. Lovely, fired in a manner I never saw him before,* though I could not but admire the cause of his displeasure, yet I had my fears, lest, contrary to the natural suavity of his temper, he might have gone a little too far. He directly told his name, while Mr. Squeezer colored up to his ears, and then added, "Sir, I give you to understand, that if you do not come into the compromise with the rest of the creditors, I'll turn screw-maker as well as yourself; and if you don't liberate the young man directly, who has been cast into prison by your bond, as sure as you have a head upon your shoulders, I'll screw you tight enough, by doubling and trebling your rent directly as the lease drops, or turn you and your screws into the streets." Mr. Squeezer said, "Sir I'll consider of it." Lovely fired again, "Sir, you shall have no time to consider of it, I'll have the young man out of prison before three o'clock, at the very latest, as by then I must leave the town."

Wor. Well I must confess this was a delightful way of falling into a passion, on so good a cause. You know what St. Anthony discovered, that there was no taking the devil by the nose, but with a pair of tongs; and how did matters succeed?

Loveg. Sir, within about an hour afterwards, all things were completely settled, and his discharge was actually procured. The young man wanted to run home to his wife and family directly; for though he

* I believe he was angry and sinned not.

had been thoughtless and giddy, yet he was of an affectionate disposition. However, Mr. Lovely insisted upon it, that he and his family, should come and dine with him at the inn. as he wanted to give them all some farther advice ; and to see the rapture and astonishment of the youth, while he followed his kind deliverer to the inn, is not to be described. Mr. Lovely ordered a plentiful repast, and sent a note to the young man's wife and her mother, requesting their attendance, as they might hear of something considerably to their advantage.

Mrs. Wor. What a meeting this must have been !

Loveg. Quite as affecting as any we had before in the gaol, though of a very different sort. After the young man had been with us about a quarter of an hour, the mother and daughter, and her two children came in—the daughter, the young man's wife, ran to her husband, and cried “ Oh my dear ! what are you here ? Tell me how it was that you could get out of prison ! ” He answered, “ That dear gentleman has procured me my release. ” She immediately cried, “ Oh Sir ! who are you ? who can you be ? I heard it was Mr. Lovely, the sheriff, who has procured a pardon for two of the poor criminals who were to have been executed this day—are you that gentleman ? ” He answered, “ Yes Madam, my name is Lovely ; but you must compose your mind, and after dinner, which is coming up directly, I have to give you and your husband some farther advice, for your future good. ”

Wor. But what were the mother's feelings on this occasion ?

Loveg. Sir, though I am neither a dreamer of dreams, nor an interpreter of dreams, nor in the general, a believer in dreams, yet I was much surprised to hear the old lady cry, after a solemn pause, “ That was the very gentleman I saw the night before last in my dream, who came to me, and said he was going to bring my son-in-law out of gaol ; and that they

would be a very happy couple for the time to come : and when he appeared to be going from me, I thought it was certainly an Angel."

Wor. She really was not far beside the mark ; for no man living deserves to be taken for an Angel, more than he. But I remember he acted the same part once before, when he released a poor creature, whom his great uncle had confined.

Loveg. Yes Sir, but with this difference ; that poor man had a sort of a claim upon him, having been thrown into gaol by the extortionate disposition of his uncle, while he possessed the property ; but this unfortunate youth, had no sort of claim upon him, but upon his humanity.

Wor. And that is the best claim after all. But what did he do with him afterwards ?

Loveg. Oh Sir, he first gave him some most solemn cautions and admonitions, against that giddy and thoughtless turn of mind which had, in a great measure, been the cause of his failure in the world ; and then, most affectionately recommended him to seek for the power and grace of God upon his heart, whereby alone he could be made "sober and temperate in all things." That all he could do would be of no avail to make him happy, unless he was possessed of that heavenly wisdom, and sedateness of mind, which was the constant concomitant of the grace of God upon the soul. He next gave a similar exhortation to his wife, at the same time putting into her hands, Witherspoon's Essay on Regeneration, beseeching her that she would not cease to pray to God, till she found the same change was wrought in her, which she would find so well described in that book ; that glorious change being the only groundwork, on which the good of our future conduct could depend. Then he advised them both to put their shoulders to the same burden ; observing that if they paid due diligence to their business, their business would duly pay them for their attention. He next took out his pocket book, and said, "Sir, you want

something to begin your business anew—here is fifty pounds for you, and as I wish you to go to work directly, having given you one fifty, I shall lend you fifty more; nor shall I hastily demand the debt, if you are more attentive, industrious, and diligent for the time to come.

Consid. With what wisdom, zeal, and liberality, this incomparable young gentleman conducts himself in all his noble acts of charity! what Minister upon earth could have given better advice, as it relates to our social and relative connexions through life!

Wor. [To Mr. Lovegood.] Why Sir, he quite took your office as an exhorter out of your hands.

Loveg. Indeed Sir, none of us had power to say a single word. we were all so struck and surprised. And it was much more consistent that he should give the advice, by whose liberality the young man was redeemed from ruin, and restored to the enjoyment of the comforts of life, from which he was so cruelly debarred. But I have not told you all yet. While his poor wife was weeping with astonishment and surprise, quite overcome with gratitude, he immediately cried, "Madam, you must not be so downcast—I was once afflicted by some family difficulties as well as yourself: drink another glass of wine, and see how that reads." She attempts it and fails. He cries, "Madam, it is only another twenty pound Bank-note from Mrs. Lovely; she is one of the most tender-hearted women on the earth, and I should be sure to have one of her good-natured lectures, if I did not communicate a present from her to you." And this most elegant and affectionate method of administering relief, instead of drying our eyes, affected us more than ever. And just then, one of the little children who came with the mother to meet the husband, not capable of understanding the cause of our being so affected, ran to the mother and cried, "Old Squeezer sha'n't send my dear papa again to gaol;" expressing its grief in such affecting

language as might be expected from a child, who just began to feel a parent's worth, and a parent's grief. This put Mr. Lovely in mind of another method of displaying his easy, pleasant way of gratifying the feelings of his most generous heart. He called the little child to him, and said, "No my dear, Old Squeezer sha'n't take away your dear papa any more : and here is some money for you to buy a great strong lock and key, to lock old Squeezer out, whenever he comes your way," thereby putting five guineas more into their possession.

Mrs. Wor. What a princely mind he has ! I wish his generosity may not out-run his income !

Loveg. Oh no Madam, when I ventured to give him a check, he said that as their family expenses did not equal half his fortune, as a plain, retired, though hospitable way of living suited them best, such occasional exertions were by no means beyond his income : and that he should make it up a round hundred before he left town : so he sent for Mr. Workman, the dissenting Minister, as he heard he was very diligent, while others were very lazy in preaching the gospel in the villages in those parts, and gave him five pounds for the poor, five pounds to assist him in his itinerant expenses, and ten pounds for himself, as he found his family large, and the congregation that supported him, principally among the poor.

Wor. Noble ! He forgot Mr. Belweather I suppose ?

Loveg. Yes Sir, and we had better all forget him.

Mrs. Wor. What a delightful youth ! and they say his other uncle, notwithstanding his displeasure about his marriage, means to make him his heir ; if so, it will fall into excellent hands. If you have any thing more to say about him, let us hear all you can.

Loveg. I recollect nothing farther than that Mr. Cater, the inn-keeper's son, who was so much affected, and more so, when he waited on us during our last dinner ; that he would sacrifice all his expectations, provided he might but follow him wherever he went ; that if he were only permitted to be his foot-

man, or even his shoeblack, he should be glad to serve him, especially as living in such a public line, though not an unlawful occupation in itself, yet as it still exposed him to so many temptations, he felt himself exceedingly anxious to relinquish it, as soon as he could.

Wor. I'll warrant he added him to his train.

Loveg. I believe not : he advised him by all means to continue in the same situation, as decent and orderly inns, were a great accommodation to the public.

Wor. I am told, he has manifested the same benevolent disposition towards his present housekeeper, since he has come to his fortune ; that she was a person of a very respectable character ; and though she brought her husband a decent fortune, and had two children by him, yet the worthless villain submitted to the intrigues of a female servant, whereby her ruin was completely accomplished.

Consid What astonishing evils arise from these adulterous amours !

Wor. Such was the case in this instance ; for this artful wretch persuaded the man to forsake the house where they then were, and live at a distance, as he had the fortune of this unhappy woman to live upon as they liked. Thus this monster of a fellow, left his wife and two children without a single shilling for their support.

Far. What devils in human shape some people are !

Wor. Directly however as Mr. Lovely heard of this story, he sent for the forsaken woman, treated her more like a sister than a servant, and provides for the children also.

Mrs. Mer. The lord bless him with a thousand times more ! I never shall forget the many anxious inquiries he sent after my dear husband, while he was ill ; and when he came to condole with me after my heavy loss, dear man, he could not speak a word without a tear.

Loveg. No wonder at it, dear Madam ; they were kindred spirits as far as dear Mr. Merryman's circum-

stances would allow. After his heart was under the influences of divine grace, he was quite another Lovely. Whatever he did, was done with such simplicity and zeal, and devotedness to God, as perhaps in so short a time, was scarce ever exemplified before.

Mrs. Mer. Ah me! I twice told him, that if he went on so fast, we should have scarcely enough to pay our weekly housekeeping accounts; and three times over dear Mr. Lovely sent us ten pounds to be distributed among the poor, just about the time when his generous heart had led him a little beyond the mark. And I must confess that my religious education only instructed me to be decent, till I saw the wonderful effects of real religion upon my dear husband's heart. (A deep sigh fetches a tear.) Oh my loss! I cannot talk any more about him.

Wor. We must out of respect to my daughter's feelings, suspend the present conversation, and inquire if you have any thing farther to relate about this amiable pair.

While the company were thus occupied in conversation respecting these delightful youths, they were surprised by an express sent by Mr. Lovely to Brookfield-hall, announcing the death of his rich uncle of Grediton; and that though he had left a large portion of his ill-gotten wealth to bad women, and base-born children, yet that the greater part of the family estate, which at least doubled his former income, was bequeathed to him.

The purport of the express was to request a speedy interview, that he might be favoured with the advice of Mr. Worthy, and blessed with the prayers of Mr. Lovegood, as he felt how much he needed both of wisdom and grace, to expend all this accumulated wealth to the glory of God.

The reader may easily judge what a large field again opens before us by this new event, for other dialogues, Such wealth, in such hands, and under such circumstances, could not but produce matter

for fresh volumes, of the most pleasing and interesting detail : but where then shall we end ? I fear, lest these my dramatic attempts, should swell beyond the size of an easy purchase. Rather then let the Reader's imagination be left with some farther scope for the exercise of his contemplative faculties, on all such displays of mercy and benevolence, in which such a delightful youth would naturally abound. All is summed up in one passage from the sacred word, and with that passage I close the scene, and give my kind and patient Readers, an affectionate adieu. " Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things—and the God of peace shall be with you."

THE END.



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